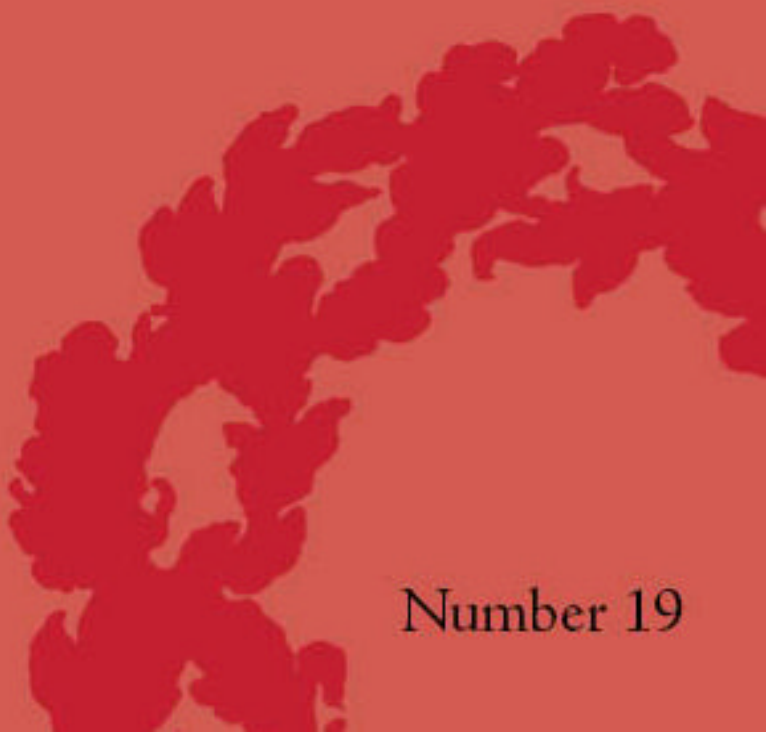
Empires in Perspective

The Quest for the Northwest Passage

Edited by
Frédéric Regard



Number 19

THE QUEST FOR THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE: KNOWLEDGE, NATION AND EMPIRE, 1576–1806

Empires in Perspective

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Frédéric Regard

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INTRODUCTION: THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE AND THE IMPERIAL PROJECT: HISTORY, IDEOLOGY, MYTH

Sophie Lemercier-Goddard and Frédéric Regard

The history of the early search for the Northwest Passage has been surprisingly overlooked. Most of the time the bibliography that examines the long and doomed quest focuses on nineteenth-century official expeditions, climaxing with the Franklin tragedy in June 1847. It is true that the death of the Trafalgar hero turned Arctic explorer underscored the absurdity of the quest while also marking the culmination of a paradigm in the British imagination. The Arctic was where a specifically British ethos was born, the model of a heroic, sublime masculinity, in a world becoming more and more complex as the British Empire was reaching its zenith. But Franklin's last expedition and the search expeditions launched as late as the 1870s were only the visible tip of a gigantic iceberg that had been floating into Victorian culture from a venerable past. The massive underwater portion of the mountain needs now to be examined.

The findings might well entail a revision of the cultural landscape that we inhabit. Indeed the discovery in 1497 of Newfoundland by John Cabot seems to have been supplanted in the cultural unconscious of Britain by the story of the two colonies of Roanoke (1584–7) and Virginia (1607), so that the Powhatan, romanticized as they are, are generally thought to provide the very first scene of the encounter between English travellers and American Indians. The history of the search for the Passage shows however that they were preceded by the 'country people' whom Martin Frobisher met on his three voyages to the new world (1576–8). It is on that first encounter on Baffin Island in August 1576 that English seamen came across for the very first time with an *unknown* people. By the end of the Lewis and Clark expedition (1804–6), the first US attempt at finding the Passage to compete with the British for control of land and the fur trade, diplomatic relations and trade with at least two dozen indigenous nations had been established.

This volume proposes to investigate the origins of what seems to be a specifically British myth by exploring the role of the Passage in the history of knowledge-construction, self-fashioning, national and imperial discourse, from

Frobisher's first voyage to the days of the Lewis and Clark expedition. This is not meant to be the work of historians or geographers. In a fashion similar to what was accomplished with *British Narratives of Exploration: Case Studies of the Self and Other* published by Pickering & Chatto in the same series (2009), the chapters will offer semiotic analyses of the texts and documents that produced the Arctic and its inhabitants as a fundamental myth in British culture. Particular attention will be paid to the nature of the accounts the English explorers brought back from the Arctic, as well as to the scenes they depicted of linguistic interaction, either with the 'Eskimos' and 'Indians' or between the Europeans themselves. In the same spirit, a number of chapters will focus on the differences in cultures of exploration, techniques and strategies encouraged by private companies or public policies. If the Passage's actual existence was eventually established by Sir Robert McClure in October 1850,[1] the only *usable* route was discovered in 1854 by John Rae who, like Samuel Hearne in the late eighteenth century, was not a naval officer – Hearne had left the Royal Navy in 1763 – but an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company.[2] By the end of the eighteenth century British explorers hired by the fur-trading companies had adopted a pragmatic approach, preferring to walk long distances, to canoe down rivers, or to use dog sleds, feeding on the land and employing techniques learnt from the natives.

'An Object Peculiarly British'

In 1497, just a few years after the discovery of America, England initiated what would be a four-centuries-long quest. A Venetian citizen, Giovanni Caboto, set off from Bristol to find a northeastern route to Asia under a patent signed by Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch. 'John Cabot' landed in some 'New Found Land', which he claimed for England. The notion of a Northwest Passage took shape a decade later when his son Sebastian led another expedition heading to the north (1508–9). By then travellers had started to grasp the magnitude of the continent discovered by Columbus: they understood that America, as the new land came to be called, formed a barrier that must be bypassed in order to get to the riches of the East. Describing a strait between 61 and 64 degrees north which then opened to the south – most likely Hudson Strait – Sebastian Cabot was certain he had found the Northwest Passage.[3] The Cabots' voyages thus marked the point of origin of an English genealogy that would extend its ramifications well into the nineteenth century, when the Northwest Passage came to be perceived by John Barrow, Second Secretary to the Admiralty, as an 'object peculiarly British'.[4] For fifty years, under the Elizabethan and Stuart reigns, Martin Frobisher, Humphrey Gilbert, Henry Hudson, William Baffin, Thomas James and Luke Foxe closely followed one another in the Arctic to become the illustrious ancestors of their Victorian spiritual sons.

The lineage was dense and diverse. In 1670, the Hudson's Bay Company was founded and the fur trade, which attracted thousands of trappers and adventurers, fostered a new wave of maritime and mostly overland expeditions, sponsored exclusively by private interests. In July 1771 Samuel Hearne, who had joined the HBC in 1766, was the first European to cross the Barren Lands to the Arctic Ocean. In 1793, Alexander Mackenzie, a fur trade employee of the North West Company, accomplished the first crossing of North America, reaching the Pacific coast by an overland route. In the nineteenth century, the Northwest Passage developed into a national obsession. In 1818, John Barrow published *A Chronological History of Voyages into the Arctic Regions*, which made the search for the passage a priority for the Royal Navy. John Ross's voyage in the summer of that same year was the first of a long series of official expeditions sponsored by the Admiralty. With the Arctic ventures of William Parry, John Franklin, John Rae, Robert McClure and Francis McClintock, to name but the most famous of these Arctic knights, the search for the Passage was no longer a geographical objective. It had become a national 'moral enterprise'.[5]

If the history of the nation cannot be circumscribed to the 'national' territory but also unfolds in faraway places that sometimes have but a tenuous link with the homeland,[6] the Northwest Passage can certainly be said to be such a focal point. Seen within this longer chronological framework and benefiting from a historical and literary approach that focuses on ideas, representations, identity and material culture, the quest no longer appears as a marginal episode in the rise and fall of the British Empire. How important was Arctic exploration in the colonial experimentation and the emergence of the nation? How did it affect England, and then later Britain's own vision of itself? Could this be the place where England first envisaged and experimented with an imperial project that would later develop into the empire on which the sun never set? Did the outlandish landscapes and the mainly maritime nature of the enterprise – with its apparent absence of territorial ambition – influence in any way the empire and nation-building dynamic? More than a sideline to the history of European expansion, the search for the Northwest Passage reveals the impact of exploration on personal and collective identity, on the budding imperial ambitions of a community and on the elaboration of a national mythology.

An Exercise in Self-Definition

Even when it is not the prelude to colonization, exploration inevitably partakes of an imperial project as the explorer postulates his epistemic superiority and assumes an investigating eye. The settlements that Martin Frobisher and Humphrey Gilbert hoped to develop in 1578 and 1583 never materialized, but the regions visited constituted a 'contact zone', i.e. a dynamic site of exchange,

domination and subjugation where different cultures met.[7] As the first prolonged contact zone outside Ireland, the Arctic was a space where travellers reflected on their personal and social identity – and on the possibly unstable, heterogeneous and ongoing nature of that identity. In the opening pages of his *True Discourse*, which relates the three voyages accomplished by Frobisher, George Best launches into a discussion about skin colour. In the course of explaining the peculiar climate of the Arctic, Best tries to understand why the people of 'Meta Incognita' ('The Unknown Shore'), the region around Frobisher Bay, are of the same colour as people living closer to the equator and he concludes that 'blacknesse' is not related to the climate but is an infection of the blood due to Noah's curse on his son Cham.[8] Though seemingly wandering far off from his Arctic subject, Best implicitly suggests that being lighter-skinned, the Inuit will prove more submissive in their future transactions with the English, a point of major economic importance. The remark also shows that exploration inevitably addressed the question of the travellers' own identity. Postulating an essentialist conception of identity, Best seems to ward off any suspicion that exploration might compromise the European's civilized self. However, placing his discussion so prominently at the onset of his narrative, Best also displays palpable though unarticulated anxiety.

Aware that exploration exposed them to change, English travellers turned the severe climatic conditions of the North into a potent factor of renewal. In his relation of Humphrey Gilbert's 1583 expedition to Newfoundland, Edward Hayes does not mitigate the failure of the enterprise: out of five ships, two turned back to England and two were lost, including all the maps and computations, the samples of extracted ore thought to contain silver, and the supplies exacted from the other European merchants in St John's Harbour. More than a hundred men drowned, starved or died of dysentery, among them the leader of the expedition, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. Hayes, however, still considers the voyage as successful on moral grounds:

> For besides that fruite may growe in time of our travelling into those Northwest lands, the crosses, turmoiles, and afflictions, both in the preparation and execution of this voyage, did correct the intemperate humors, which before we noted to bee in this Gentleman [Sir Humphrey Gilbert], and made unsavorie, and less delightfull his other manifold vertues.
>
> Then as he was *refined*, and made neerer drawing unto the image of God: so it pleased the Divine will to resume him unto himselfe, whither both his, and every other high and noble minde, have alwayes aspired.[9]

The loss of the *Squirrel* with Gilbert on board put an end to all hopes of refining the Newfoundland ore, but the voyage brought about another transformation: that of Sir Humphrey Gilbert himself. Gilbert's enthusiasm for Newfoundland was such that shortly before his death he declared he had 'now become a Northerne man altogether'.[10] The transformation process is not an alteration in which

the original character is tainted by some heterogeneous element when exposed to a different people or culture, but a purification or sublimation, a process suggested by Hayes's choice of the word 'refined'. Arctic ventures brought about an alchemical transformation: the fire of the alchemist had given way to the piercing air of the North, his crucible had been replaced by dreadful whirlpools and 'white cliffes' of sea.[11] Gilbert himself had a strong interest in alchemy, which he shared with Sir Thomas Smith, principal secretary to the queen and governor of the Society for the New Art.[12] His northern venture had revealed the noble metal of which his character was made, 'wherein may alwaies appeare, (though he be extinguished) some sparkes of his vertues',[13] enabling him to pierce the secret of immortal life.

After three expeditions to the North with Frobisher, Best noted the same potent effect of the Arctic air:

> The ayre is very subtile, piercing, and searching, so that if any corrupted or infected body, especially with the disease called Morbus Gallicus, come there, it will presentlye breake forth and shewe it selfe, and cannot there by anye kinde of salve or medicine be cured.[14]

The quest was perceived as an exercise in spiritual purification that only Englishmen uncontaminated by the French disease could achieve. In the absence of real gold or silver, it was their truer selves that English mariners could expect to find. Narratives of the expeditions to the Arctic thus started to promote the vision of a harmonious concord among a united community of 'true Englishmen and faithful friends' who helped one another in the face of material adversity. As they experienced continuous daylight during the summer months, Englishmen also seized this opportunity to share a sense of cultural kinship, enjoying notably 'the fruition of [their] books, and other pleasures to pass away the time'.[15] Men as diverse as the immigrant navigator Giovanni Caboto, English gentlemen like Walter Raleigh, Humphrey Gilbert or Martin Frobisher, and seamen like John Davis or Henry Hudson were therefore enabled to produce a common narrative that placed England on the map of imperial competition but also of spiritual progress. The chronicles of their voyages well illustrate that exploration was unmistakably perceived as a cultural performance, projecting a national image beyond the personal interests that sometimes inspired the navigators.[16] When Gilbert's admiral ship the *Delight* sunk in 1583, Hayes lamented first and foremost the death of one Stephen Parmenius before the loss of Maurice Browne, the virtuous and honest captain:

> Amongst whom was drowned a learned man, an Hungarian [Stephen Parmenius], borne in the citie of Buda, called thereof Budaeus, who of pietie and zeale to good attempts, adventured in this action, minding to record in the Latine tongue, the gests and things worthy of remembrance, happening in this discoverie, to the honor of our

> nation, the same being adorned with the eloquent stile of this Orator, and rare Poet of our time.[17]

The death of the poet meant the loss of the epic that should have sung in Latin the 'honor of our nations' to the rest of Europe. For in a sixteenth-century world dominated by the achievements of the Portuguese and Spanish explorers in the New World, England lagged behind on the European scene and in the imperial competition. Early voyages to the northern region thus came to be seen as a direct challenge to Spain's pre-eminence in the post-Columbian world, England's only course of action to claim North America as a legitimate area of expansion. Poets were therefore needed to weave the legend of England's destiny in the Arctic. John Dee, an imperial enthusiast and Elizabeth I's adviser and astrologer, argued that legendary Welsh Prince Madoc had sailed to the mainland of North America in the twelfth century, preceding Christopher Columbus by three centuries,[18] while Best referred to a mathematician friar of Oxford who had 'described almost all the land about the [North] Pole' in the fourteenth century.[19]

As early as 1507, German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller's map had shown America as a distinct continent separated from Asia by an ocean. But seventy years later, the idea that Asia and America might consist of a single continent was not uncommon. In his introduction to the *Historie of Travayle into the West and East Indies* (1577), poet and geographer Richard Willes rejected the fallacious notion, enlisting Homer, Plato and Aristotle in his demonstration. What eventually settled the argument according to Willes was Frobisher's experience: the contrary tides and greater depths he had encountered were the ultimate proof that America was a single continent, not linked in any way to Asia.[20] Even though Frobisher had not sailed across the Passage or reached Asia as had been his initial objective, Willes presented his expedition to Meta Incognita as evidence that America was indeed a distinct continent, from which it logically ensued that the Passage necessarily existed. In a sixteenth-century England that famously showed limited interest in the recent discoveries and poor geographical knowledge in general, Willes abundantly cited classical sources, but among recent and contemporary explorers mentioned Magellan's name only in passing to focus instead on English explorers: Sebastian Cabot, Sir Hugh Willoughby and of course Martin Frobisher.[21] Willes's insistence on Frobisher's expedition, combined with the absence of Columbus's name, imparted a very different history of exploration: Frobisher was presented as a contender for Columbus's legacy, for according to Willes only the English mariner had actually demonstrated that the lands discovered were indeed a 'new world'. The Northwest Passage thus appeared in a very different light: its discovery would eclipse Columbus's own partial discovery, ultimately challenging the unprecedented advantage Columbus had given to Spain over its European rivals in the building of an overseas empire.

Similarly, if Best felt compelled to acknowledge the Spanish and Portuguese lead in the new world, he nevertheless dismissed the epistemic value of their discovery:

> The Spanyards and Portugalles undoubtedly are worthye immortal fame and glorie, for their greate enterprises and good successes they have therein: yet have they never seene nor hard such straunge and extraordinarie accidents of the sphere as hath happened unto the Englishmen. For neyther Spaniarde nor Portugal ever sawe in all their long voyages, the sun and the moon to make whole and perfect revolutions above the horizon.[22]

Spain and Portugal had conquered America, established outposts and founded settlements. But Best distinguished between the Catholics' material accomplishments and the Protestants' superior motives: England's venture in the Arctic was a quest for *knowledge*. In its early voyages in search of the Northwest Passage, England sought symbolic and scientific authority among its European neighbours and promoted a tentative English identity, that of the untainted Northern man.

Empire, Virtue and Profit

The first British Empire (1583–1783), built on colonization and conquest in the West, is commonly presented as 'more the product of accident than design'.[23] As long-distance trade only slowly evolved into a tentative global network, the first Empire lacked the structure of the second British Empire, which with its focus on trade in the East would give rise to the first economic world power. Even after Humphrey Gilbert had formally taken possession of a 400-league-long strip of land in Newfoundland on 5 August 1583,[24] possession did not lead to colonization, nor did it prevent Spanish or French fishermen to fish for cod in the region. Elizabeth's reign noticeably showed a lack of political will, not to say indifference or even reluctance to territorial expansion.[25] By 1700 Newfoundland was still an 'informal unsponsored settlement'.[26]

Just a few years earlier, Best had shown a similarly ambivalent attitude to imperial expansion. Though he was prone to enthusiastic displays of English pride in his description of his fellow travellers' accomplishments, praising 'the invincible mindes of our Englishe nation',[27] his *Discourse* ended on mixed feelings:

> To conclude, I finde all the countrie nothing that may be to delite in, either of pleasure or of accompte, only the shewe of mine, both of golde, silver, steele, yron, and black leade, with divers pretty stones, as blewe sapphire very perfect, and others, whereof we found great plenty, may give encouragement for men to seek thither.[28]

Best's blunt assessment of the difficulties inherent in Arctic colonization is immediately counterbalanced by an accumulation of potential riches. But the inventory of precious metals and stones to be found in the North seems to be intended to blind the reader and make him ignore the dangers of the country.

Best's ambiguous conclusion, probably anticipating the upcoming fiasco – the ore mined in Meta Incognita was in fact valueless – aptly sums up why the Elizabethan dreams of territorial expansion were abandoned and replaced by fantasies of a future commercial exploitation of the region that proved just as illusive.[29]

Early exploration of the northeastern coast of North America, Newfoundland and the Arctic region may not have resulted in the profitable colonies that Gilbert, Willes or Hakluyt optimistically envisaged, but the efforts deployed to overcome the difficulties encountered in such hostile regions helped shape the imperial ambition, contributing to the emergence of a national consciousness. From Cabot's discovery voyage in 1497 to Canada's declaration of independence in 1931, the search for the elusive sea lane was a major excuse for four centuries of English presence and control in the region. British exploration in the Arctic created heroes on the margin of the empire but wove a tale of fortitude that underplayed the process of territorial expansion, racial subjection and economic exploitation that colonization elsewhere entailed. The failures and tragedies of Arctic explorers did not make a dent in the triumphant story of the British Empire; on the contrary, the almost inhuman sufferings undergone by the crews promoted the vision of a disinterested British colonial model. That is why the idea of empire did not follow a straight line from England to Ireland to the shores of colonial America, but definitely took a detour through the Northwest Passage.

When Willes wrote about the Northwest Passage in 1577, appealing to his countrymen to embark on a worthy cause, he presented the venture as both profitable and virtuous:

> The enterprise [a new 'Passage to Cathay'] of itself being virtuous, the fact must doubtless deserve high praise, and whensoever it shall be finished the fruits thereof cannot be small; where virtue is guide, there is fame a follower, and fortune a companion.[30]

The two seemingly opposed principles, virtue and profit, are not simply a common goal in the quest for the Northwest Passage. The aphoristic style – and Willes, an accomplished orator and the author of the first defence of poetry written in England (*De Re poetica*, 1573), was fully aware of this – emphasized a logical correlation and bore a prescriptive value: only virtue would ensure success and wealth. Willes's introduction to the *Historie* serves several purposes. It professes the existence of the Northwest Passage through a syllogistic demonstration: the enterprise is virtuous, virtue is necessarily crowned with success, therefore the Passage exists and will be found. It also introduces a discourse of virtue that is intended to counter the suspicion travel still inspired in sixteenth-century England.[31] Exploration is an example of the active life that humanist scholars endorsed. The Northwest Passage promised economic returns while steering clear of greed. Willes's introduction thus imagined an economic alternative to privateering.

Hayes drew a similar portrait of the English traveller in his account of Gilbert's voyage. Newfoundland is described as a land of plenty but its abundant commodities are a chance to further moral improvement rather than financial prosperity: prospective travellers who chose to embark on expeditions to the Arctic would 'adventure *as becommeth men*, to obtaine an habitation in those remote lands, in which Nature very prodigally doth minister unto mens endevours'.[32] Such a discourse constrained even Frobisher's expeditions, though the search for gold quickly supplanted the search for the Passage. From the start, Best declared that the success of the enterprise was not to be measured by gold, and he set a higher standard for the English, showing a similar taste for aphorism: '*Difficiliora pulchriora*, that is, the adventure the more hard the more honorable'.[33] The discovery of an island – named Best's Blessing – abounding in the black ore thought to contain gold is celebrated in an ambiguous way: 'if the goodnesse myghte aunswere the great plentye thereof, it was to be thought that it might reasonably suffise all the golde gluttons of the worlde'.[34]

The discourse of virtue is a neat strategy that foresees the possibility that the Arctic might not be as profitable as South America and transforms England's shortcomings into a gain. The failures of competing nations to colonize the 'New Found Land' or discover the Northwest Passage were not a sign of the complexity of the enterprise or impenetrability of the Northern regions. It was a sign, to take up Hayes's words, that God had 'reserved' that part of the world for the 'English nation'.[35] In the context of England's ambivalent relationship to Spain, the discourse of virtue helped maintain a difference. The absence of gold was no longer an impediment: it indicated an irrevocable distinction between the two imperial nations, implying that Spain had built its empire on greed whereas the English were by then ready to build theirs on virtue.

Myth, Imagination, Community

A parenthesis in the grand imperial narrative, the legend of the early quest for the Northwest Passage was soon forgotten – possibly, as Mary Fuller suggests, because encounters with fish were not thought fit to promote the imperial dream.[36] Cod probably changed the face of the world, but as the Passage never materialized, at least as an open waterway to Asia, its importance in the political and economic growth that turned Britain into the first workshop of the world has been consistently downplayed.[37] Yet the Passage was essential in creating what Benedict Anderson, speaking of the eighteenth century, called an 'imagined community', i.e. a community of people who elaborated a national consciousness through new forms of communication (made possible by the development of print-capitalism, book-publishing and vernacular languages).[38] When the quest was renewed in the early nineteenth century, the quick succession of expedi-

tions and of exploration narratives luxuriously published by John Murray revived in fact a dormant myth, underscoring by the same token the permanence of a set of national traits – physical courage and undaunted tenacity, moral fortitude and endurance, all combined with a passion for national supremacy. In the absence of trade, exploitation or settlements, the profit generated by the search was therefore entirely cultural, yielding a powerful national myth. From 1497 to 1854, each expedition thus performed a variation on the same mythological plot line, the brave and doomed confrontation between Englishmen and Arctic Nature. The popularity of Millais's 1874 painting *The Northwest Passage*[39] was ample proof that twenty years after the passage had been located it was still a potent myth: the old sailor, surrounded by open maps, logs and memorabilia from his past expeditions, is determined to take up the challenge and restore England's honour. The painting's subtitle, 'It might be done, and England should do it', leaves no doubt as to the ideological implications of the work. George Nares, who led the British Arctic Expedition in search of the North Pole in 1875, acknowledged that Millais's painting had swayed public opinion in favour of his voyage.[40]

Early voyages of exploration to the northern regions had of course already offered a fascinating blend of myth and geography. Though Best denounced the myth of the frozen sea, he nevertheless opened his narrative on a description of the pole inspired by Mercator's 1569 polar projection, consisting of four land masses separated by four powerful rivers flowing northwards into the earth beneath a 'monstrous great mountain of wonderful gret height'.[41] The travellers continued to be confounded by the climate, which like Best they described as either 'fervent hote, or else extreme colde'.[42] It has been argued that John Barrow's illogical rejection of William Scoresby's detailed observation of ice conditions in the Arctic[43] was due in fact to Barrow's curiously anachronistic belief that the polar regions harboured a warm open sea, while Scoresby, who had had a solid scientific education at the University of Edinburgh, considered the theory a ludicrous chimera.[44] Usual categories were turned upside down: winter conditions were found in the middle of summer, the sea turned into a rollercoaster of ice mountains and dangerous whirlpools, ships could be lifted by the ice above the sea, dreams and reality overlapped. Strange sightings or circumstances were reported: a fish in the shape of a lion, 'strange voyces' heard at night, a narwhal tusk 'that may truly be thought to be the sea unicorn', or an Inuit woman who was suspected to be a witch and was made to expose her feet to check that she was not cloven-footed.[45]

A protean, paradoxical object, luring sailors into a channel open one year yet impenetrable the next, the Passage owed its enduring fascination to the fact that it proved difficult to be installed as a fixed monument of collective knowledge and memory, conveying rather an idea of resilience in its capacity to change and renew itself, seemingly defying logical order and deferring all possibility of closure. If to Scoresby, the Arctic was nature's laboratory, to the vast majority of English soci-

ety, including some of the most influential members of the Admiralty, it remained a 'playground for the imagination'.[46] All the elements of myth, famously defined by Claude Lévi-Strauss as an imaginary solution to real and insoluble contradictions,[47] were therefore available for endless re-elaboration: narratives of Arctic exploration in their infinite variety should be read as ever-renewed articulations of such imaginary solutions to insoluble contradictions. Over three centuries the quest for the Passage, its fascination amplified by an ever-expanding readership anxious to learn about the vicissitudes of the collective human adventure, yielded endlessly diversified forms of the quest, technological innovation combining with aesthetic choice to offer updated versions of the same fundamental myth. Inevitably communication about the subject turned into a ritual that came to symbolize national cohesion and collective identity.

A Brief Overview of this Volume

Part I is dedicated to the earliest attempts, and focuses on the various contexts in which the myth came to be constructed. Hakluyt's editorial practice, which focused on printing or reprinting original documents with authorial attribution rather than synthesizing them into a unified, authoritative narrative, will be carefully examined in the first chapter (Mary Fuller). Attention will also be paid to Hakluyt's affinities with contemporary cosmography. The theorists and advisers for these early voyages included men like the mathematician Robert Recorde, whose cosmographical treatise *The Castle of Knowledge* (1556) would be part of the ship's library on Frobisher's first Northwest Passage search of 1576. Both Recorde's *Castle* and William Cuningham's *Cosmographical Glasse* (1559) provided readers with the ability to visit regions they might never observe through their senses through the imaginative reality afforded by mathematics. Both authors also punctuated their expositions by reference to actual English voyages. Mariners like John Davis and George Best used personal observations to modify and reshape a theory of zones already under scrutiny by English cosmographers.

Our next chapter (Ladan Niayesh) purports to study the example of the Strait of Anian, allegedly situated at the Pacific end of the Northwest Passage. Possibly named after the Chinese province of Ania mentioned in Marco Polo's account of his travels to Cathay, the fabled strait first made its appearance in Spanish sources. It grew in fame over the next few decades, to the point of being included on maps made by such authorities as Giacomo Gastaldi in 1562 and Bolognini Zaltieri in 1567. Thriving in the interstices between the known, the new and the possessed, English discourses on the Strait of Anian crystallized around Francis Drake's 'secret voyage' along the northwestern coast of America in the summer of 1579. If most of Drake's papers were confiscated by the crown on his return to England and later destroyed in the Whitehall fire of 1698, the mythified reports of his

expedition journeyed in a variety of English documents, becoming a half-vented state secret, a matter of cosmographic speculation, a building block in a personal and national heroic myth, and a political instrument of legitimation in territorial disputes with Spain. It is therefore necessary to consider how the English managed to appropriate if not the non-existent strait itself, at least the myth of its exploration and its appertaining discourse of knowledge, wealth and power.

The question of truth and reliability remained a crucial issue. Our third chapter (Catherine Bécasse) focuses on the strange textual fate of Baffin Bay, the naming rituals that presided over its gradual emergence in Arctic mythology, how the 1616 maps charting the area came to be discarded, what were the rhetorical strategies which resulted in the gradual disappearance from history's records of the master's name Robert Bylot, and conversely in the fame and success finally achieved by his pilot William Baffin. Baffin's narratives were not free from tampering. It appears that both Samuel Purchas and Luke Foxe altered the initial text, omitting passages or adding personal remarks. The chapter conducts a comparative study of these differing 'true relations', raising the issue of the purposes and consequences of such changes in the making of a national myth.

Part II is concerned with the forms of 'Otherness' which Arctic voyages made directly palpable. Frobisher's voyages may have later faded in the national memory, overshadowed by Drake's flamboyant exploits, Raleigh's promises of gold and John Smith's adventures in Virginia, but in 1578 when George Best published his narrative of the three expeditions, his *True Discourse* went beyond the maritime journal or the promotional report to produce the first national chronicle of England's imperial ambitions. The discovery of new lands encompassed a socio-political dimension: future settlements would relieve the commonwealth of the needy, and trade with the natives would give ample work to the homeless and idle. The fourth chapter (Sophie Lemercier-Goddard) examines how Frobisher's encounters with ice and 'Eskimos' were used as a mirror held up to a budding nation. A soldier of profession, probably educated at Eton, Best composed an English epic: his 'bare and true accompte' pronounced England the next global empire while turning the unknown land into a laboratory where English identities could be fashioned and tested.

English explorers such as Frobisher, Davis or Hudson did not just discover new territories: they also encountered 'savages' whose identity they defined by contrasting it with their own. Just like the landscape, which was a source of contradictory feelings ranging from fear to wonder, the explorers' encounters with the Inuit gave rise to a wide array of reactions. The fifth chapter (Marc-Antoine Mahieu and Mickaël Popelard) argues that if many accounts described the Inuit as a coarse and inferior people, incapable of 'culturing the land to any perfection' in the words of Dyonise Settle, John Davis was the first to be favourably impressed by the Greenlanders' way of life, with which he became familiar in the

course of his three voyages (1585–7). Davis's own journal for his second voyage records a genuine interest in the native population, whose language he seems to have studied with unusual precision. Davis, much like Thomas Harriot, albeit in a completely different geographical context, should therefore be recognized as one of the English pioneers in the field of ethnography.

Thomas James's famous *Strange and Dangerous Voyage* (1633), the first book of Northwest Passage exploration published by an expedition's leader for an English monarch, will be here of particular importance. The sixth chapter (I. S. MacLaren) argues that the formula for narrating an expedition that failed to find a passage or even to chart much new geography may be found in James's presentation of dangerous encounters with ice and extreme weather, his combination of religious faith and scientific discoveries or innovations, and the provision of appendices that, among other things, included observations of natural phenomena. An analysis of some of the literary and other qualities and content of *Strange and Dangerous Voyage* shows that James's book offered a model for subsequent British attempts to find the Passage in that it demonstrated how an engaging account, versed in the various faiths of its age, could go far in deflecting criticism of an expedition's failure. Far from being the anomaly that, in terms of its sensational wording, its title makes it seem, James's narrative may therefore be seen as an early-seventeenth-century template for nineteenth-century Britons who sailed in search of the Passage.

Part III considers the shift in methods that came to impose itself in the course of the eighteenth century, when men employed by private companies based in Canada resumed the quest. Samuel Hearne may be said to exemplify this change: between 1770 and 1772, trusting his fate to the expertise of his Indian guide, an Ojibwe chief, he travelled 1,300 miles on foot to the Coppermine River and was the first European to cross the Barren Lands to the Arctic Ocean, disproving by the same token the existence of the Strait of Anian. Our seventh chapter (Nathalie Zimpfer) argues that the main interest of his narrative (published posthumously in 1795) lies in his record of life among the Chipewyan Indians. At a time when Britain's most prominent historians described the Indians as savages, what characterizes Hearne's attitude in his interactions with the Indians is first and foremost curiosity.

Alexander Mackenzie's narrative of his voyages in 1789 and 1793 (published in 1801) also chronicles the author's attempts at finding the Northwest Passage from the southern shore of Lake Athabasca, reaching first the Arctic (down the Mackenzie River) and then the Pacific (canoeing down various rivers until he reached the Bella Coola Gorge). This was the first journey across North America and Mackenzie's account of his formidable accomplishment would attract considerable attention, notably from Thomas Jefferson, who as president of a new nation that had just bought from the French the land west of the Mississippi

River, dreamed of finding a serviceable trade route to the Pacific and to the Orient. Mackenzie's book reveals much about the impetus for the search, and the conditions under which it was carried out. The eighth chapter (Robert Sayre) contends that if Mackenzie attempted to enlist British support by appealing to imperial aspirations, his guiding motivation as a fur trader was in fact thoroughly commercial. Mackenzie's mentality, as it appears in his account, notably through representations of his relationships with expedition members, with Indians, with the natural world, and with the goal of finding the Passage itself, is also exemplary of a shift towards more interested attitudes.

This panorama of overland exploration would not be complete without a reference to the Lewis and Clark expedition (commissioned by Jefferson to survey the new territory), which was entirely predicated on the assumed existence of 'a practicable water communication' across the continent 'for the purpose of commerce', as Jefferson's letter of instructions had put it. Our last chapter (Gérard Hugues) examines the traces of Lewis's indomitable trust in the geographical layout of the continent, transmitted upon him by the (self-)delusory voice of his president. If the net result of this first American expedition of discovery was bitterly disappointing, providing final evidence that the Northwest Passage simply did not exist and all the theories about the symmetry of the continent were invalid, Lewis's own narrative is teeming with notes and speculations that tend to obstruct the blatancy of his own failure. Journal-writing is used to assert the primacy of the mind over the physical world, thus contributing to the myth of an epic national move to the west, with God on the president's envoys' side.

1 ARCTICS OF EMPIRE: THE NORTH IN *PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS* (1598–1600)

Mary C. Fuller[1]

What did Englishmen in the sixteenth century know about the Arctic, and how did they arrive at that knowledge? The century saw many proposals, projects and theories about the Arctic, but relatively few English voyages. The interest of the Arctic, at the time, lay chiefly in the possibility that it might afford alternate routes to the Indies, by the east, west or by a route directly over the pole: any such route would have been shorter, closer to hand, and unclaimed by rival powers, carrying as a bonus the glory of first discovery. The bulk of English experience above the Arctic Circle in the period came through annual trading voyages to Muscovy via the White Sea, a route inaugurated by the otherwise disastrous Northeast Passage search led by Sir Hugh Willoughby and Richard Chancellor in 1553. Voyages of exploration were far scarcer: Stephen Borough in 1566 and 1567, Arthur Pet and Charles Jackman in 1580, Sir Martin Frobisher in 1576–78 and John Davis in 1585–87 make up the very short list.

This essay has two focal points. The first is the body of theoretical 'knowledge' about the Arctic and the pole available to late-sixteenth-century planners and voyagers. The second is a case study: accounts of John Davis's three Arctic voyages published in the second edition of Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1598–1600).[2] Davis was not the only English captain to have led an expedition into the Arctic, but he appears to have been the only one deliberately to sail (or attempt to sail) *north*, rather sailing along coasts that trended east or west. Hakluyt was, of course, the pre-eminent publicist of his countrymen's travels, especially at sea; his collections had an incalculable influence on what was known and believed about these voyages by later generations. At least in the early decades of his career, he was closely connected with the men who were themselves pre-eminent in northern exploration, and his collections remain the central reference for first-hand accounts of the voyages they planned and undertook. Perhaps as a result of the kinds of records the two men left, Davis has been far less studied than Frobisher, his immediate predecessor. Looking at the Davis materials as Hakluyt published them in *Principal Navigations* affords us two different perspectives: on

the voyages, as a conjunction of geographical theory and practice; on the narratives, for the ways reception was inflected by mode of publication.

In the prefatory material to his collection, Hakluyt argued that it was for their northern voyages and discoveries that the English could claim to rival – or surpass – the Spanish, Italians and Portuguese who had first sailed to India and to the Americas:

> wil it not in all posteritie be as great a renowme unto our *English* nation, to have bene the first discoverers of a Sea beyond the *North cape* (never certainly knowen before) and of a convenient passage into the huge Empire of *Russia* ... as for the *Portugales* to have found a Sea beyond the Cape of *Buona Esperanza*, and so consequently a passage by Sea into the east *Indies*; or for the *Italians* and *Spaniards* to have discovered unknowen landes so many hundred leagues westward and southwestward of the streits of *Gibraltar*, & of the pillers of *Hercules*?[3]

(Terence Armstrong notes Hakluyt's excellent coverage of the northeastern voyages, but comments that he 'may have done too well' by his acquaintances in the Muscovy Company in suggesting that 'England was first in the field', since the White Sea route had been described earlier by a German author whose work Hakluyt knew.)[4] Readers could also find among his material the kinds of exceptionalist views exemplified by Edward Hayes, a participant narrator of the voyage mounted by Humphrey Gilbert in 1582–3: as Hakluyt annotated his text, Hayes laid out 'Probable conjectures that these land north of Florida, are reserved for the English nation to possess'.[5] Hayes echoed the observations of Robert Thorne in a letter to Henry VIII half a century earlier, materials Hakluyt had printed from manuscript in support of Gilbert's project in his earliest collection, *Divers Voyages* (1582), and would reprint in both editions of the larger collection:

> of the foure partes of the worlde, it seemeth three parts are discovered by other Princes. For out of Spaine they have discovered all the Indies and Seas Orientall: so that by this part of the Orient & Occident, they have compassed the world. For the one of them departing toward the Orient, and the other toward the Occident, met againe in the course or way of the middest of the day, and so then was discovered a great part of the same Seas and coastes by the Spaniards. So that now rest to be discovered the sayd North parts, the which it seemeth to mee, is onely your charge and duety.[6]

Fleshing out these ideas of England's special claims and interests in the north, Hakluyt printed full accounts of English voyages to the north of Scandinavia and Russia in volume 1 of *Principal Navigations*, and in volume 3 (whose materials were, again, organized to begin with the north) another full and even redundant set of accounts describing the voyages of Martin Frobisher and John Davis to the northwest.

Arctic Theory: Antiquarians

Tudor voyages to the Arctic coincided with an era of antiquarian research, some of it by men highly interested both in understanding what lay to the north and in staking out an English claim to it. The mathematician, civil servant and antiquarian Robert Recorde discovered in a manuscript of the Old English Orosius the narrative of Ohthere ('Octhere'), a Norse mariner who delivered to King Alfred an oral account of sailing around the North Cape of Norway into the White Sea. Through Recorde's means, the story was disseminated to audiences who might have a practical as well as a historical interest in the story. Ohthere's voyage makes its appearance in two of Recorde's mathematical treatises published in the 1550s, the latter dedicated to the Muscovy Company; later, Humphrey Gilbert quoted the narrative, 'translated into English [from Saxon] by M. Nowel seruant to Sir William Cecil', as evidence of 'their experiences, which traveled long before our times' into the north. Ohthere

> went the very same way, that we now doe yerely trade by S. Nicholas into Moscovia, which way no man in our age knew for certaintie to be by sea, until it was since discovered by our English men, in the time of King Edward the sixt ... and therefore was accompted a new discovery, being nothing so indeede.[7]

Hakluyt reprinted Gilbert's *Discourse of Discoverie* in both editions of *Principal Navigations* and, in the second edition, added the narrative of Ohthere itself. 'Offered' to King Alfred through Ohthere's oral testimony, the voyage seems to be understood as antedating English 'discovery' of the Passage backwards by several centuries. While he published chiefly on mathematics, Recorde's notes on and from a number of surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts testify to serious historical interests. Ohthere's narrative links these interests to his practical involvement with the Muscovy Company and England's northern interests more generally.

The same combination of antiquarian, mathematical and geographical interests marked the career of John Dee. Owner of an important and much-used library, editor of mathematical works by Euclid and Recorde, author of manuscript treatises on England's imperial claims in the North Atlantic, and adviser to several decades of northern voyagers, Dee's influence on English projects in the North can hardly be overstated.[8] His hand can also be seen in Hakluyt's selection of materials, both as an author and a provider of documents – among the large number of medieval documents added to the second edition of *Principal Navigations* were several used by Dee elsewhere, some accompanied by his commentary: for instance, accounts of King Arthur's Arctic conquests drawn from Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the Arctic voyage of a medieval English friar provided to Dee and, later, to Hakluyt by Gerard Mercator.[9] Another text almost certainly brought to Hakluyt's attention by Dee concerned the North Atlantic

voyages of the Venetian Zeno brothers, a narrative first published in 1557 but purportedly concerning voyages that took place 200 years earlier.[10] Dee made liberal use of this text for its description of the northern regions to which he believed England had a historical claim. The Zeno narrative described Arctic islands graced by libraries full of Latin books and monasteries that drew on geothermal power for heat and to 'produce flowers and fruites and herbes ... even as in other temperate countries'; Dee believed that the libraries of Greenland and 'monuments' of Arctic Estotiland and Drogio, named by the Zenii, might hold evidence of England's claims to the north.[11] Hakluyt, for his part, printed the narrative of the Zeno brothers in *Divers Voyages* as well as in both editions of *Principal Navigations*.

At least some of what was 'known' about the Arctic by the 1570s and 80s was thus derived from history, or rather from the motivated reconstruction of the past by Dee and others. This civilized Arctic, populated by the descendents of Arthurian colonists (for instance), was not the Arctic actually encountered by English voyagers; yet it must have had its influence on those voyagers, constructed as it was by the men who sent them forth and made their maps. But these narratives by particular travellers, an Ohthere or a Nicholas Zeno, were also situated within a larger framework of more general understandings about the region they traversed. One word for that set of understandings would be 'cosmography'.

Arctic Theory: Cosmographers

'Books of cosmography' figured prominently in the famous scene to which Hakluyt traced his original interest in geography:

> being a youth ... it was my happe to visit the chamber of M. Richard Hakluyt my cosin ... When I found lying open upon his boord certeine bookes of Cosmographie, with an universall Mappe: he seeing me somewhat curious in the view thereof, began to instruct my ignorance.[12]

Elsewhere in the 1589 prefatory material, Hakluyt expressed disdain for cosmographers and their 'wearie volumes ... most untrulie and unprofitably ramassed ... together'.[13] Yet cosmography was more than a discredited editorial practice in the sense Hakluyt used it here; as practised by English cosmographers of the sixteenth century, it was a systematic, mathematically-oriented description of the Earth as a sphere receiving radiation from the different spheres of the heavens. William Cuningham defined the term as follows:

> Cosmographie teacheth the discription of the universal world, and not of th'earth only: and Geographie of th'earth, and of none other part ... albeit Cosmographie describeth the face of th'earth, yet it is by noting and observing certaine divisions, answering unto v. principal paralleles or equidistant circles in the heavens.[14]

Cuningham and others sought to provide readers with the kind of mathematics required to understand and model the Earth in relation to the sun and other heavenly bodies, and of course such work had a foundational relevance to skills in navigation and cartography that the English were, in his day, beginning to acquire. With this kind of cosmography Hakluyt had a demonstrable affinity. He wrote to Sir Francis Walsingham from Paris in the 1580s urging that Walsingham, then the Queen's Principal Secretary, oversee creation of a public lectureship in mathematics for the benefit of navigators. Later, his 'earnest persuasion' led to the translation and publication of Bartholomäus Pitiscus's *Trigonometry* by Ralph Handsdon; this work on the nautical applications of trigonometry 'for the mariners use' was dedicated to Sir Thomas Smith and Mr John Wostenholme, 'sole founders and erectors, of the lecture of navigation and the honorable city of London. And two of the principal adventurers of the northwest discovery'.[15]

As the dedication by Handsdon might indicate, Hakluyt's interest in the applications of mathematics for maritime exploration connected him to a larger set of mathematical practitioners and others who, similarly, perceived its utility for the practical purposes of commerce, surveying, transportation and war as well as for geography and astronomy. A list of names associated with mathematics in late sixteenth-century England, and another of those associated with the Northeast and Northwest Passage searches of the same era, would have many common terms: Thomas Hariot and John Dee are only two of many possible examples.[16] While mathematics had its practical uses for observation and calculation of position at sea, it also served the broader ends of systematic modelling and prediction. Cosmography was a particularly important part of the intellectual equipment that Hakluyt's contemporaries would have brought to thinking about the Arctic, because it enabled predictions about a part of the earth that was largely unknown through immediate experience; Hakluyt himself recalls using 'globes, spheres, and other instruments of this art' for his public lectures on geography at Oxford.[17]

The predicted nature of this unknown Arctic was subject to considerable change during the period under study. The geographical and cosmographical writings of the sixteenth century reverberate with the consequences for science of Columbus's discoveries in the tropics.[18] Most fundamentally, these instigated re-examination of the theory of zones as understood by classical and medieval science. This theory divided the globe from north to south into five zones defined by the major circles of latitude – the Arctic and Antarctic circles, the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, and the equator – defined in turn by the yearly cycles of the sun's apparent movement. Classical science predicted that only the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere - between the Arctic Circle and the Tropic of Cancer, corresponding to circum-Mediterranean Europe, Asia and Africa - was suitable for normal reproduction and civil life.

These predictions failed to describe the temperate climates and abundant nature observed by Columbus and his successors in equatorial America and the Caribbean. As these observations were absorbed, experience of regions in the hot zones to the *south* of Europe also began to modify theory about the still-unexplored *North*. A document from the 1520s by the Bristol merchant Robert Thorne makes the connection explicit:

> it is a generall opinion of Cosmographers, that passing the seventh clime, the sea is all ice, and the colde so much that none can suffer it. And hitherto they had all the like opinion, that under the line Equinoctiall for much heate the land was unhabitable. Yet since (by experience is proved) no land so much habitable nor more temperate. And to conclude, I thinke the same should be found under the North.[19]

The prediction that the Arctic would be habitable implied that it might also be navigable, or so Thorne asserted. Indeed,

> it is very cleere and certaine, that the Seas that commonly men say, without great danger, difficulty and perill, yea rather it is impossible to passe, that those same Seas be navigable and without anie such danger.[20]

He described an Arctic of only transitory hazards, characterized more importantly by the advantages of perpetual light and of the privileged access provided by navigation across the pole:

> being past this litle way which they named so dangerous, (which may be two or three leagues before they come to the Pole, and as much more after they passe the Pole) it is cleere, that from thence foorth the seas and landes are as temperate as in these partes, and that then it may be at the will and pleasure of the mariners, to choose whether they will sayle by the coastes, that be colde, temperate, or hote. For they being past the Pole, it is plaine, they may decline to what part they list.[21]

Imagining the polar regions to be navigable and habitable created a space of possibility particularly relevant to a nation like England, whose northerly position placed it at a greater distance from the more southerly routes and regions of the Indies located and controlled by Portugal and Spain. Yet Thorne's plea for northern exploration appears to have fallen on deaf ears. It was only towards the end of Edward VI's reign that activities appear to have resumed, with the Northeast Passage search mounted in 1553. While a few voyages probed north and east beyond the White Sea landfall of Richard Chancellor in 1553 (Stephen Borough 1556, Arthur Pet and Charles Jackman 1580), from the 1560s onwards there is evidence of growing interest in the possibility of a passage north of the American continent. Humphrey Gilbert's *Discourse* argued that such a passage necessarily existed; while his own fatal voyage of 1582 was intended for exploitation of the mainland further south, the ideas he expressed surely persisted in planning for the Frobisher voyages of the 1570s. John Davis's voyages of Arctic exploration in the 1580s were undertaken under the patent of Gilbert's brother

Adrian. The record of northern exploration - as distinct from regular voyages of fishing and trade - appears somewhat spasmodic. At the same time, however, many continuities linked the generations of explorers, theorists and promoters. In the 1550s, Sebastian Cabot could recall the northwest voyages captained by his father some 60 years earlier; in the same way, the voyages of the 1570s and 1580s were informed by earlier thinking as well as earlier experiences. Thorne's materials were transcribed by John Dee, and were included by Hakluyt in all three of his collections, an indication of the interest they held for later thinkers.[22]

One of the volumes purchased for the ship's library on Frobisher's first Northwest Passage search of 1576 was Robert Recorde's *The Castle of Knowledge*, a cosmographical treatise composed twenty years earlier with the aim 'directly to further the Cathay search'.[23] Both Recorde's *Castle* and Cuningham's almost-contemporary *The Cosmographical Glasse* were constructed as dialogues between a master and a scholar, systematizing the terms, methods and findings of cosmography. Both promised readers the ability to visit regions they might never observe with their senses through the imaginative reality afforded by mathematics. Indeed, Cuningham's dedication to Robert Dudley indicated the priority of knowledge derived from reasoning of various kinds over that generated by observation or custom:

> For what doth man differ from a beast in nature, if he (leaving reasons rule) folowe his sensuall appetite as they do? Or wherein dothe he so neare approche unto God in likenesse: as by Science, and Knowledge? for this thing is proper to God only, to know all thinges: and unto beast [*sic*] to be in all things ignorant, except in such as ther senses and custome teach them.[24]

Not everything was theoretical. The knowledge produced by the discipline of cosmography would be pragmatic, allowing merchants to benefit both themselves and their country, or physicians to cure patients through knowledge of new plants. Some of its input, again, would be experiential: Cuningham's master informs his student that 'I have for the chief places of Englande used bothe my frendes trauailes, and also mine owne obseruations'.[25] Yet the real power of cosmography, in this framing, was its ability to reach beyond either what could be observed by the cosmographer himself, or observed virtually through the oral or written accounts of others. Equipped with an understanding of the globe, its mathematical principles, and the descriptive terminology of geographers, Cuningham's scholar waxes lyrical about the power conferred by this learning:

> observing this order of you prescribed, I may in like sort at my pleasure, draw a card for ... any particular region: yea in a warm and pleasant house, without any peril of the raging seas: danger of enemies: loss of time: spending of substance: weariness of body, or anguish of mind. Oh how precious a jewel is this, it may rightly be called a Cosmographical glass, in which we may behold the diversity of countries: natures of people, and innumerable forms of beasts, fowls, fishes, trees, fruits, streams, and metals.[26]

Cuningham's text, in fact, betrays a limited knowledge either of the formal or informal knowledge returned to Europe by sixteenth-century mariners. In the fifth and last book of *The Cosmographical Glasse*, devoted to the location and description of particular regions, references to a handful of Newfoundland place names suggests some information derived from the fishery, but the confused description of Sub-Saharan Africa remains unleavened by the recent experience of English traders there, and 'Yucatán, Cuba, Jamaica' become Asian islands associated with the Moluccas. (Cuningham's America was discovered by Vespucci, and is comprised largely of Peru and Hispaniola, with 'Brasil' - located by Cabral in 1500 as a region of the mainland - listed as one of a number of islands.)

Recorde's work was considerably more informed by contact with mariners, and particularly with the experience of Englishmen travelling to Africa and Russia in the 1550s; he makes numerous references to Wardhouse (modern Vardø, Norway) for example, 'where our newe venterers into Moscovia do touch in theyr viage'.[27] His *The Whetstone of Whitte* (1557), a treatise on arithmetic and algebra, was dedicated to the Muscovy Company, inheritors of the discovery enterprise set in motion under the governance of Sebastian Cabot in the early 1550s; manuscript sources attest to his association with others, like Cabot and Henry Ostrich, involved in planning the northern passage searches of their day.[28] Recorde's work was no less keen than Cuningham's, though, to use cosmography – that is, a mathematically informed model of the earth in relation to the sun – in order to model conditions in places to which English mariners had not yet penetrated. Cosmography allowed Recorde to predict, for instance, that

> under the Poles of the worlde, it is halfe a yeare continuall daye, and the other halfe yeare, continuall nyghte, bicause so longe againe the Sonne is not seene above that Horizonte.[29]

Recorde's master and scholar have several such exchanges concerning the nature of conditions at the poles, and after each one the scholar comments on the power of a science that allows him 'to marke placees absente, as if I were present, and to see ... by reason more certenly, then I can do by sense, if I were there presently'. Indeed, he remarks,

> I coulde not better understande the state of that place, if I were there to see it, than I doo by thys beholding of the Sphere, and the motion of it. And thys (as I take it) is a marvaylous excellencye in knowledge, to bee able so certaynly to judge of thinges absente, as if they were present.[30]

This ability to 'judge of things absent' had a special pertinence to an Arctic region as yet largely unknown. Recorde's master characterizes the Muscovy Company's voyages of exploration as promising to satisfy a widely-shared yearning for knowledge about the North:

> our hope is that if [the worthy company of our English merchants] doo continue as they have valiantlye begonne, they shall disclose those unknowen people which dwell directlye under the Pole, or at the leaste waies discover that climate, suche as it is, to the full satisfaction of that importune desire, whiche hathe forced manye thousands to wisshe, that whiche not one yet (that we knowe) could attayne.[31]

The knowledge sought here went beyond merely locating a sea route to the north of Asia, and seems properly Arctic in its focus: Recorde supposed the desire of 'manye thousands' to be directed towards discovery of 'that climate', if not actually 'those unknowen people which dwell directlye under the Pole'.

Recorde's cosmography was clearly marked by exchanges between theory and practice. He advised on and promoted England's northern ventures even as he incorporated their findings into his own more theoretical work. Cuningham's bookish approach to geography was not without its heirs, however, even in the realm of practice. Gilbert's *Discourse* made a similar case that being able to imagine and project things that you had not experienced through the senses was particularly associated with a rationality that distinguished human beings from animals and asserted human dignity:

> The diversitie between bruite beastes and men, or betweene the wise and the simple, is that the one judges by sense only, and gathereth no surety of anything that he hath not seene, felt, heard, tasted, or smelled: And the other not so onely, but also findeth the certaintie of things by reason, before they happen to be tryed.[32]

Gilbert's plea for hypothesizing in advance of experience was made within the frame of an argument in favour of searching for the northern passage to China and the Indies in the west instead of the east. Gilbert himself had no experience in northern waters; his argument was based on what he had learned from books, some of them very old. His book gives some indication, however, on how the testimony of experience was being interpreted (and contested – Gilbert was responding to arguments made by Anthony Jenkinson in favour of further exploration to the northeast). By the 1560s, the years during which Gilbert wrote, English mariners had some significant experience of the Arctic seas north of Asia, not enough to forestall a subsequent search for a passage by the east (in 1580), but certainly enough to suggest that these were not *easily* navigable waters. Gilbert argued, however, that the difficulties of ice and cold encountered in the eastern Arctic were specific to its particular physical geography: observations of depth, currents and tides indicated that voyagers were sailing into a closed sea, like the Mediterranean or the Caspian. Thus, the dreadful sailing conditions described earlier by Stephen Borough and encountered later by Pet and Jackman could be seen as not simply a function of latitude, but rather of latitude's effects as magnified by the geography of an Arctic basin.

This brief survey gives some sense of the conceptual framework that would have been available to a man setting out for the Arctic from England in the mid-1580s. John Davis's explorations of the waters between Western Greenland and Baffin Island – what is now the Davis Strait – were path-breaking in their achievement of a farthest north for the western hemisphere. Yet they moved through a zone that, bleak as it may have been to the eye, was rich in expectations and assumptions.

Arctic Practice: John Davis's Voyages and Texts

During the years 1585–7, Davis made three voyages in search of a northern passage to 'the Isles of the Moluccas and China' under a patent granted to Adrian Gilbert in 1583, and funded by a group of gentry and merchants from the court, the city and the west country who shared the pragmatic aim of finding a new route to the resources and markets of eastern Asia.[33] Rather than pursuing the recent discoveries of Martin Frobisher (1576–8), who believed Frobisher Bay and Hudson's Straits to hold out promise of a passage, Davis focused his attention on higher latitudes. In 1585, he sailed up the western coast of Greenland roughly as far as Manitsoq before turning west and sailing about 100 miles (his estimate) into Cumberland Sound. In 1586, he sailed to 66° N before turning west and then coasting Baffin Island to the south. In 1587, he reached his farthest north, *c.* 73° N (in the neighbourhood of Upernavik, Greenland), then sailed west until he encountered pack ice off the northeastern coast of Baffin Island and was constrained by prevailing winds to turn south again. Davis and his crew reached further towards the pole than any Englishmen, or indeed any Europeans, are known to have done before them. Despite experiences in the Canadian Arctic that frustrated his efforts, Davis remained convinced that further north, open seas awaited mariners (and patrons) with the courage to pursue future voyages.

In 1589, two years after Davis's final return from the Arctic, Hakluyt obtained and printed accounts of all three voyages in the first edition of *Principal Navigations*: the first and third by John Janes, a merchant employed by Davis's patron William Sanderson, and the second by Davis himself. To these, he added two brief letters from Davis to Sanderson, and an account - by another merchant, Henry Morgan - of the alternate course held by two ships on the 1586 voyage. In 1595, Davis published two books on maritime matters. *The Seamans Secrets*, a treatise on mathematical navigation for mariners, described navigational methods and defined terms. *The Worldes Hydrographical Discription* was not the general survey its title suggests, but a multi-stranded argument – addressed to the Privy Council – for the existence of a navigable passage in the high latitudes north of present-day Canada, and for renewed funding of voyages in search of it. (Interest in the enterprise had flagged after the death of Sir Francis Walsingham, one of its key patrons, as Davis laments in the prefatory material to *The Seamans*

Secrets). When Hakluyt returned to Davis's materials in the second edition of *Principal Navigations* (1600), he added two significant items to those reprinted from 1589: an excerpt from *The Worldes Hydrographical Discription* and the 'traverse-book' (a transcribed log) from Davis's 1587 voyage. The excerpt from Davis's book provides a narrative overview of the three voyages, duplicating the individual accounts Hakluyt had obtained in manuscript; the 1587 log provides a third document for that voyage.

In both the narrative excerpt and the log reproduced by Hakluyt, as well as his freestanding narrative of the 1586 voyage, Davis assiduously noted kinds of observational evidence that might bear on conditions further to the north. This evidence included currents, the colour and depth of the ocean, the presence of ice, and temperature – in addition to oral testimony and the implicit evidence of ethnographic description.[34] Among these, temperature would seem to be one of the obvious and critical factors in determining whether any route across the North Pole or even through the Arctic would be practicable; Davis represents cold as one of the chief objections that he has to meet through argument, after satisfying his audience that America was not connected to Europe, Africa or Asia at any point. Before examining his ideas about the Arctic climate, we can get an idea of his observations from the materials printed in Hakluyt.

Davis's log has columns for several kinds of information: date, course, distance, latitude ('elevation of the pole'), winds. His qualitative observations fall into a broad column on the right, under the heading 'The Discourse'. It is here that we find more expansive observations on weather and climate ('we had a very quick storm'; 'we had this day fair weather') and the germ of what takes a more narrative form in the accounts by Davis and Janes.[35] Yet both the log and the narratives by Janes and Davis give an ambiguous picture of the climate they experienced in the Arctic. In his account of the 1585 voyage, Janes comments twice that rations had to be increased because of the cold.[36] In 1586, having landed on the coast of Greenland at 66° N, Davis comments that he gave an Inuit captive 'a new suit of frieze after the English fashion, because I saw he could not endure the cold, of which he was very joyful'.[37] On the following page, as they coast a large ice floe in 63° N, he describes the air as 'contagious', the sea as full of ice, and notes that their shrouds, ropes and sails are frozen, and that 'our men through this extremity began to grow sick and feeble'.[38] At the same time (and sometimes even on the same page), both men repeatedly describe the wind or the air as 'very moderate', 'very tolerable', 'hot', 'very hot', even 'extreme hot' or 'marvellous extreame hot'– in latitudes as far north as Cumberland Sound.[39] Nothing in the materials Hakluyt prints aids us in understanding why such divergent observations are found jostling each other in the text, and what they mean.[40]

Hakluyt had printed only 2,000 words from an original that was 11,000 words in length. In *The Worldes Hydrographical Discription*, Davis sought to answer

objections against the possibility of a navigable passage and build counter-arguments for the conditions that would make the existence of the passage possible. Looking at this longer text, we can see that Hakluyt's editing extracted narrative from theory, and observation from narrative: the inclusion of Davis's logbook moves us even further towards data and away from synthesis. Davis's original, however, was concerned precisely with making sense of what he had observed, within a larger framework of argument about the nature and causes of climate.

We might pause to wonder about the rationale for Hakluyt's choices as editor here. Hakluyt both printed and retained in the second edition Humphrey Gilbert's arguments that a passage north of an island America must exist, even though his *Discourse* was several decades old and written in advance of Gilbert's brief and limited experience in the North Atlantic. In the second edition, he also printed in its entirety George Best's account of the failed Frobisher voyages, giving a separate entry in the table of contents to 'Experience and Reasons of the Sphere', a substantial section of Best's book focused on climate *theory* as a frame for its narrative and ethnographic content. Both the Gilbert and Best texts, like *The Worldes Hydrographical Discription*, had been published as freestanding books prior to their appearance in *Principal Navigations*.[41] It would be hard to argue for his choices simply from the quality of the content. Hakluyt may have felt some reserve towards Davis on behalf of his kinsman Thomas Cavendish, a relative through marriage. Cavendish had accused Davis, posthumously, of a catastrophic desertion during their failed voyage of circumnavigation in 1591.[42] The preface to Davis's *Seamans Secrets* suggests that its publication was part of an attempt to recover from the reputational damage caused by Cavendish's accusations. Or perhaps Hakluyt's preference for the log over Davis's proof of a passage and its navigability simply reflected his admiration for its careful and detailed recording of observations.

In 'Reasons of the Sphere' (whose title indicated its reliance on cosmographic thinking), Best articulated a set of understandings about the Arctic that Davis shared. Best took as a fundamental postulate that 'all heat and cold proceed from the Sun', but argued that earlier thinkers had gone astray by considering only the angle of the sun's beams, and not their duration. He understood the Arctic summer, with its six months of uninterrupted daylight, as characterized by heat that 'is strong, and by continual access ... still increased and strengthened' so as to produce 'commodious and moderate heat'.[43] This (correct) hypothesis about the effects of continuous, if oblique, light consorted well with assumptions drawn from a very different field of knowledge; Best argued that God had ordered his creation on earth such that its parts afforded communication or passage, were tolerable to each other, and were of use to humankind, to whom dominion over them had been given. Both these ideas are visible in Davis's exposition: ideas about the

effects produced by oblique but continuous sunlight, and ideas about God's intent in creating that constrained the possible characteristics of the physical Earth.

Expectations that the sea around the pole would be frozen rested on the presumption that the angle and duration of sunlight in the Arctic Circle would not be sufficient to counteract the cold of nights and winters there:

> when the Sunne by his presence should comfort that parte of the world, his beames are so far removed from perpendicularitie by reason of his continuall neerenes to the Horizon, that the effectes thereof answere not the violence of the winters cold. And therefore those seas remayne for ever undissolved.[44]

Davis responded to such concerns first simply by noting first-hand observation, by himself and by others, of unfrozen seas in the far north, both in the White Sea and in what is now the Davis Strait. In 1587, at the point when contrary winds and a 'great bancke of yse' forced him to turn south along the coast of Baffin Island, he had observed to the north a 'great sea, free, large, very salt and blue and of an unsearcheable depth'.[45] He went on to consider the properties of sea ice, which he had observed both in the form of icebergs on the open sea and in the form of surface ice extending out from the shoreline. Both forms were comprised of fresh water, he noted, so that the formation of ice had to be on or very near land. Furthermore, icebergs had been observed to melt from the bottom in seawater to the point that they would suddenly invert themselves (Davis had tested some of his observations by floating pieces of ice in a vessel of salt water). If the sea had properties such that it was able to dissolve ice, it was 'greatly against reason that the same should be frozen' itself. Moreover, if *all* the water frozen into snow and ice over the winter did not dissolve over the course of the summer, Davis reasoned that over the time since the creation of the world, the world's moisture would have gradually become locked up at the poles, and 'by time the world … left waterless'. But clearly that was not the case. Why not? He believed that the saline character of seawater gave it some of the properties of oil, which according to Pliny was naturally hot.[46] The 'native heat' attributable to salt water caused 'the coldness of the air … to give place'. Arctic cold was thus moderated by the heating properties of the sea.[47] And it was after all by sea that Elizabethan navigators hoped to travel.

Davis also shared with Best the view that much of the cold experienced in the North Atlantic was accidental (and therefore local) rather than essential (and therefore increasing with higher latitudes). One kind of evidence that had to be dealt with was the experience of cold in the Newfoundland fishery. Fishermen commonly encountered a 'noysome pester' of ice even in the forties, leading to the conclusion that further north would be 'desperate clymates and … seas congeled that never dissolve'. Much of this cold, Davis thought, could be attributed not to the latitude of Newfoundland, but to the effects of wind blowing from an ice-bound shore that was cooler than the water: 'it playnely appeareth that the

very breth of the yse is rather the cause of this cold, then the distempreture of the ayre'.[48] If that was true, decades of experience off the shores of Newfoundland could be disregarded in making predictions about conditions further to the north.[49] Observations made on Davis's voyages added experiential heft to theories that cold was accidental and local; for instance, Janes noted that off the coast of Greenland 'when the wind came from the land, or the ice, it was some what cold, but when it came off the sea it was very hot'.[50] In a related set of observations, the more southerly coast of Greenland was named by Davis 'Desolation', because of 'the lothsome vewe of the shore, and Irksome noyse of the yse', while further north along the western coast of Greenland, 'green and pleasant' islands were observed.[51]

Davis's Arctic resembles that predicted by Robert Thorne: locally cold, but with steadily more favourable conditions as one approached the pole. His thinking appears to have relied on several kinds of support, both the evidence of observation and experience, and the conviction that, because God would not create a region that was useless to humankind, the 'cold is sufferable by his everlasting decree'.[52] But Davis went further than these claims that the Arctic Ocean would be both navigable and tolerable: the penultimate section of his book was titled, 'That under the Pole is the place of greatest dignitie'. In it, he wrote that people living at or near the poles 'no doubt ... have a wonderfull excellencie, and an exceeding prorogative above all nations of the earth', living as they did in the 'perpetuall light' of a six-month polar day and a polar night illuminated by 'twylight and full moones'.[53] Such ideas about the far-reaching effects of extended daylight rested on an understanding of the sun as 'the chief instrument and mean that God uses' to generate, preserve and alter sublunary creatures.[54] Recorde had earlier described the special conditions of light that would affect people 'dwelling under the poles', but the polar people invoked in his exposition appear to function largely as explanatory tools, as suggested by this exchange, following an exposition on how the sun would appear at the pole:

> Scholar. It is truthe, yf anybody doo dwell directly under the Pole. Master. It is not now my purpose, to proove what partes of the earthe be inhabited, (for that appertaineth to Geographye) but to declare howe the Son doth shewe in all partes of the worlde.[55]

Davis materialized these hypothetical people 'under the pole' as the target of English evangelization, exchanging their perpetual solar light for the light of the Gospel. These polar people, I would argue, are not the people of Greenland that actually appear in his narrative accounts, people with whom there was a mixed record of communication and conflict. Not exhibiting surpassing excellence, they were simply a people of 'good stature and tractable conditions'.[56] Davis went well beyond home-bound theorists in attributing a special character to the high Arctic, just beyond the limits of his own unparalleled experience.

Davis's fame has been modest. In modern times, he has received far less attention than Frobisher, whose alleged discovery of gold led to a financial bubble and all the records produced by legal wrangling over money, and whose mining on Kodlunaarn Island left traces in the archaeological record as well as in Inuit oral history.[57] His captives, their treatment, and their eventual fate have been a powerful attractor for other readers. Davis appears to have left a less rich trace, although his work as a mathematician and instrument maker may yet raise his stock for historians of science. Even Hakluyt appears to have treated him less favourably than his predecessor. Yet Davis did publish his results in another very important form: the globe produced by Emery Molyneux with the patronage of the same William Sanderson who had funded Davis's voyages. This famous globe was the first to be produced in England; copies of it and the accompanying celestial globe were presented to the Queen, and visitors recorded observations of the workshop where the globe was being prepared. The great map historian Helen Wallis describes the Molyneux globe as a graphic equivalent to Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*, drawing on the same sources, making the same kind of polemic point: it was 'designed as a record of English enterprise in maritime discovery'.[58] The graphic medium of the globe possess some important affordances that the printed collection did not share: its visual information was easily internationalized.[59] Davis's place names and delineation of Arctic coastlines persist on a Dutch globe (*c*. 1600) dedicated to Prince Maurice of Nassau by Jodocus Hondius, Molyneux's Dutch collaborator and apparently the inheritor of his plates.[60] But globes, powerful as instruments and as claims about the shape of the world, are fragile as artefacts. The second edition of Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* survives in well over two hundred copies; the Molyneux globe, in two. So the vagaries of medium affect what *we* know.

2 FROM MYTH TO APPROPRIATION: ENGLISH DISCOURSES ON THE STRAIT OF ANIAN (1566–1628)

Ladan Niayesh

In the epistle to John, Bishop of Lincoln, which opens the third part of *Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625), the author boasts of offering his dedicatee 'a *World*, yea, a New world, in great part one Age younger to mens knowledge then *Amercia*, sometimes stiled by that Name'.[1] Yet, on turning the pages to the first accounts in the volume, the reader is surprised to find William of Rubruck, Marco Polo and other medieval travellers to Tartary showing the path to Purchas's younger-than-America 'New world'. This example shows how as late as 1625, looking forward to a New World always further west still started with a framework of assumptions that paradoxically took the beholder back in time and to the East. This chapter concerns itself with one of those westward journeys of the mind that originate in a mythical East: the journey of the straits of Anian, the imaginary end on the Pacific side of the much sought-after Northwest Passage and allegedly the shortest way to reach Asia from the American New World. The journey in question does not belong to any given traveller or travel liar *per se*, but is the mental journey of a myth in the minds of many early modern European cartographers and explorers, a fiction of eastern descent begetting facts in the West. As Stephen Greenblatt warns us at the beginning of *Marvelous Possessions*: 'Representations are not only products but producers, capable of decisively altering the very forces that brought them into being'.[2] The straits of Anian are one such marvellous representation, an eastern product turned producer in the European West, begetting a chain of actions and reactions, with political and financial implications, as well as rhetorical and ideological resonances.

A Mapmaker's Myth

Dubious in its very origin, the name 'Ania' apparently derives from a single reference in Marco Polo's *Travels* (*c.* 1298–9), in a passage primarily concerned with an area roughly corresponding to the Gulf of Tonkin:

> Starting from the port of Zaitun, and steering by the west and somewhat south, for 1500 miles, you pass a gulf called Cheinam, which gulf extends in length for a distance of two months' sail towards the north, and is bounded towards the south-east by the province of Mangi, and on the other side by Ania, Toloman, and many other provinces already mentioned.[3]

With its references to going successively west, south, north and northeast, this labyrinthine passage appears to take us all around the South China Sea and back where we started. But whether Polo's Ania is to be taken to mean the province of Annam in present-day Vietnam or the Chinese island of Hainan, it is not identified as a strait and is definitely not located anywhere near the Arctic. The later collocation of these very distant places is by no means rational and does not derive from the experience of any actual traveller, but may have been simply caused by a confusion on the name 'South Sea' long given to the Pacific Ocean in its entirety, as opposed to 'North Sea', an appellation applied to the Atlantic.

Horror vacui is a characteristic of many sixteenth-century world maps, which frequently fill their blanks by using large print names or displaying monsters or fabulous creatures deriving from a mobile stock of eastern marvels. It is on one such map of eastern Asia drawn by the Venetian cartographer Giacomo Gastaldi in 1561 that Ania first appears with a northern location.[4] The map shows the coast of China extending up to latitude 50° N, where the map stops on the name 'ANIA. PRO.' (province of Ania) written large across it and filling as much blank space as possible for an area about which factual data were at the time cruelly missing. Filling the gaps on his map with details relying on the authority of his famous compatriot, Gastaldi also makes room for Zaitun and the other locations mentioned in the Polo extract above.

Shortly after, Polo's and Gastaldi's place names are transferred to a map of the northern part of the American continent made by another Italian cartographer, Bolognini Zaltieri, in 1566.[5] The port of Zaitun is still there, and so are the sea of Mangi and Polo's other locations, including Ania, which for the first recorded time has become a strait, 'Streto de Anian', separating the Asian and American landmasses. The map does not provide any latitudes, but the relative proximity of the California peninsula (not an island here, contrary to what appears on many other sixteenth-century maps) and Anian can easily lead the viewer to believe that the straits are situated somewhere near the 50° N of Gastaldi's map. It does not take more for the myth to materialize, and the textual and cartographic circulation of this erroneous or interpolated information repeated over the next few decades gradually gives it a certain claim to authenticity. Indeed, during this period, the straits of Anian gradually become an established feature on maps of the Arctic regions as well as on maps of the American continent, where they conveniently provide a kind of mirror image for the straits of Magellan, producing a visual balance between the northern and southern hemispheres.

Entering the Economy of Investment and Speculation

'No text is an island', Mary Baine Campbell writes, 'least of all the texts of a period and culture that tried to annex all the islands in the world'.[6] The first English work featuring a map which accommodates the Anian myth is a good example of such combinations of a will to discover and an urge to possess. The work in question is Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *A Discourse of a Discouerie for a New Passage to Cataia*, written in 1566 but not published before 1576.[7] It includes an anonymous copy of a world map by Abraham Ortelius (Antwerp, 1564) which, following Gastaldi's indications, places Anian on the Asian side, but next to an anonymous strait separating that continent from America.[8] The work itself is not that of a geographer presenting the latest state of available knowledge, but that of an advocate of Arctic expeditions, published at a time when Martin Frobisher was much in need of such propaganda to get political and financial backing for his forthcoming first journey in search of the Northwest Passage (1576). As such, the work aims less at establishing geographical facts than at planting an idea and a purpose in the minds of the readers and potential backers of the project. This can be seen from the outset in the title's paradoxical phrasing: 'a Discovery for' (opening the way towards something already believed to be there, prior to any actual exploration and discovery), rather than 'a Discovery of' (displaying the results of an accomplished discovery). This paradox is even acknowledged and praised as a distinctive characteristic of Gilbert's work in the treatise's opening Epistle to the Reader, by George Gascoigne: 'whereas other *Cosmographical* workes doe but shew us things already knowen & treated of, this *Discouerie* doeth tend to a very profitable and commendable practise of a thing to bee discouered'.[9]

Accordingly, 'profit' and 'commendation' are key preoccupations in this work, which sets out to chart not a geographical, but above all a mental and textual territory, complete with a history to be retrieved, riches to be coveted and disputes over their ownership. It is true that the volume's discourse on riches remains in modal, conditional and hypothetical forms, as in the author's opening letter to his brother Sir John Gilbert in which he evokes the 'wonderfull welth and commodities, which might, and would ensue thereby',[10] or in the testimony of the Chinese sailors, wearing hats of gold and silver featuring pelicans, who are said to have merely 'signified by signes' to the Spanish explorer Coronado that their country was a mere thirty days' journey away from America.[11] But the bulk of the treatise is devoted to providing the yet unexplored territory with a *déjà-là* history going back to Plato's Atlantis[12] through the testimony of many writers, geographers and travellers down to the authority of Sebastian Cabot, whose expedition, supposedly up to 67° N latitude in the service of the English crown, helps the author hinge a discourse of appropriation on one of discovery.[13]

In a context of mounting challenges against the Iberian powers' monopoly over the American riches and western routes to Asia, the question of who owns the discovery (or rather who pre-empts it) is of course of key importance, as can be seen in the following quote attributed to the Portuguese King Sebastian, urging secrecy upon one of the many alleged discoverers of the passage: 'If England had knowledge, and experience thereof, it would greatly hinder both the King of Spaine, and me'.[14] Significantly enough, the king of Portugal is supposed to have made this statement to prevent his navigators from probing any further into the reports of discovery brought to him. In this episode, the straits acquire value not as a territory yielding immediate profit, since the king chooses to make no use of them for the time being, but as a secret that becomes all the more precious by virtue of its being set aside and saved for later. What this episode in particular and Gilbert's treatise as a whole open up is what Mary Fuller calls 'the (future infinitive) space of the credible',[15] halfway between what appears likely at a given time and what is imagined from there, a space that can be taken on credit, and as such can enter the economy of investment and speculation, so crucial a concern to (among others) the investors of the Cathay Company who were backing Gilbert's theories and Frobisher's expeditions.

The 'Famous Voyage' of a Cartographic Myth

Such was the speculative context in which Francis Drake undertook in November 1577 the 'famous voyage' that was to become his circumnavigation, an enterprise whose initial objectives certainly did not include a reconnaissance of the strait of Anian. On the contrary, if we are to believe the surviving draft plan of the voyage, Drake was expected to venture no further than latitude 30° S on the western side of the American continent and return to England by way of the Strait of Magellan, before the storms and Spaniards forced him to seek another way home, first through the frozen north and then west across the Pacific.[16] Yet, through the multiple and complexly mediated accounts of that voyage and the many blind spots in them calling for creditable speculation, Drake's journey became the English travel that resounds most obsessively with the Anian myth.

It is a well-documented fact that within a week of Drake's return to England in September 1580, he was summoned to court, where he surrendered his log book and chart to the queen. These materials were never published. Over the following decades, only a few witnesses, including Samuel Purchas, reported having seen Drake's chart at Whitehall, before it was destroyed in a fire in 1698.[17] In the absence of Drake's first-hand version, the accounts we are left with are the six-leaf gathering of 'The Famous Voyage of Sir Francis Drake into the South Sea', a last-minute addition to the 1589 edition of Richard Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations* – which he takes up again with a few changes in his second edi-

tion (1598–1600), the journal of Francis Fletcher, Drake's chaplain during the circumnavigation, partly used in the other accounts, and the material gathered by Drake's nephew (also called Francis) and published under the title *The World Encompassed* in 1628.[18]

How far north did Drake actually go in his journey along the western coast of America, before turning back and then deciding to head west through the Pacific and towards the Moluccas? Not very far and certainly not anywhere close to the mythical straits of Anian, if we are to trust the earliest available account of the journey, i.e. the 1589 version of Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations*:

> The 5. day of June, being in 42. degrees towards the pole Arcticke, we found the air so colde, that our men being greeuously pinched with the same, complained of the extremitie thereof, and the further we went, the more the cold increased vpon vs. Whereupon we thought it best for that time to seeke the land, and did so [...] till we came within 38. degrees towards the line.[19]

The 42° N of this extract would place the farthest point in Drake's venture somewhere around the current southern limit of Oregon, and it appears surprising that Drake should have encountered such extreme weather at this latitude in the middle of the summer. Does the account exaggerate the climatic conditions out of sheer sensationalism, or did Drake and his ships actually go much further north than what is acknowledged here, with the details being suppressed following the general policy of secrecy applied to the Drake material? Although there is no consensus on this or even on the exact location of Drake's landing place at 38° N, it is commonly assumed that Drake's journey must have taken him at least as far as the place now called Drake's Bay, near Point Reyes in California, north of San Francisco, which is precisely situated at 38° N. Staying there or thereabouts from 17 June to 23 July 1579 to repair his ships and prepare for the desperate attempt across the Pacific, Drake briefly claimed the land for his sovereign and called it Nova Albion, receiving the natives' homage in the queen's name. Though the colony lasted only for the five weeks of Drake's stay, its symbolic importance cannot be underestimated, since this was in a way the first colony founded by the English on American soil. As such, the Nova Albion episode became one of the highlights of Drake's circumnavigation and a staple of Hakluyt's and others' later propaganda writings in favour of English colonization in America.[20]

Technically speaking, the account quoted above records a failure to find a passage through the frozen north, but the marginal gloss in Hakluyt's volume undertakes to radically redefine the perspective on this episode, transforming it into a heroic success and a pushing back of the limits of the unknown and unconquered: 'June. Francis Drake sailed on the backe side of America to 42. deg. of Northerly latitude'. Besides giving us the impression that the sailing had been part of a set design (which it clearly was not), the gloss makes the reader see

America as some kind of fabulous monster on whose back Drake has mounted in triumph. The same phrase 'backe side of America' and the image it conjures had already been used by Hakluyt in the epistle dedicatory of his *Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America* (1582), a volume which itself opened on a propagandist piece in favour of northern explorations.[21] Harping on the same theme in his epistle to Philip Sidney, Hakluyt lists among the reasons for his believing in the existence of a Northwest Passage 'the experience of captaine Frobisher on the hyther side, and Sir Francis Drake on the backe side of America',[22] placing Drake's incidental – almost accidental – venture towards the Northwest Passage on an equal footing with Frobisher's planned and repeated expeditions.

A visual equivalent to Hakluyt's verbal rhetoric of 'discovery for' rather than 'discovery of' (as in the title of Gilbert's treatise) can be found in Michael Lok's sketched map of the Arctic regions, which was appended to the *Divers Voyages*. As a governor of the Cathay Company and one of the chief investors of Arctic explorations, Lok offers here not just a map but a statement, a kind of cartographic speech act. Indeed, his map does not content itself with presenting place names and possible routes to be explored in the future for the possibility of a Northwest Passage, but more importantly displays dates and English names at the farthest northerly points: 'Angli 1576' and 'Frobisher' on one side, and 'Anglorum 1580' on the opposite side, in reference to Drake's voyage. With these inscriptions, the English are indeed present 'on the hyther side' and 'on the backe side' of America, ready to meet halfway along the hypothetical Northwest Passage for a full conquest of the whole map. Lok's map and Hakluyt's text thus work along the lines of a similar rhetoric of appropriation, in which to own the discourse becomes a first step in owning the discovery itself, making it something of the 'manifest destiny' of the English nation to make the promise of the map come true.

Textual rather than actual conquest looms large in Hakluyt's reprinted version of Drake's 'Famous Voyage' in the 1598–1600 edition of *Principal Navigations*. As David B. Quinn duly points out, if Hakluyt keeps the same account with only a few minor changes, he gives it a very different focus by separating the California portion from the rest of the journey and including it in a section on Californian explorations, so as to stress the English claims on the west coast of North America.[23] Hakluyt also fiddles slightly with the claimed exploration, pushing it somewhat further north to make it reach 43°, rather than the 42° of his first edition. Not only does the change appear in the text and its gloss where the latitude was previously mentioned, but it is even made prominent in the new title given to the California portion of Drake's journey: 'The course which Sir *Francis Drake* held from the hauen of *Guatuclo* in the South sea on the backe side of *Nueua Espanna*, to the North-west of *California* as far as fourtie three degrees: and his returne back along the said Coast to thirtie eight degrees'.[24] Hakluyt also subtly deflates the argument of potentially sceptical minds doubting the

reference to the extreme cold mentioned as the reason for Drake's turning back, when he discreetly inserts an explanation for it in the account: 'The fift day of June being in fortie three degrees towardes the pole Arcticke, *being speedily come out of the extreame heate,* wee found the ayre so cold, that etc.' (emphasis mine). The rest of the account being identical to the first version, Hakluyt's almost unnoticeable adjustment subtly helps the new version sound more credible and creditable, while remaining generally faithful to the previous publication.

Possessing and Obsessing

Meanwhile, Ortelius's 1590 map, which Hakluyt has appended to his new edition of *Principall Navigations*, shows how far the Anian myth itself has journeyed along the path of creditability since the 1560s of Gastaldi and Zaltieri. Here, Ania is no longer an Asian province; nor is it just a strait between two continents or an adjacent area. It has become an established kingdom in its own right, 'Anian Reg.' ('Reg.' for 'Regnum'), standing next to Quivira, another imaginary kingdom, and extending about 30° north and south on a westward bulge on the North American landmass.[25]

'Representation can never escape the ideology of which it is a concrete form', Bill Ashcroft justly remarks.[26] But if ideology is arguably a first step in the genetic history of a representation, the representation itself can over time gain in magnitude and influence to the point of growing larger than the ideology that begot it in the first place, becoming its driving force, its mirage or even its frustrating limit. In this particular instance, the Anian that originated in the ideology of travel and power proper to maps and propagandistic writings in favour of Arctic explorations, seems to have gradually gained a life of its own to become not just a myth of discovery, but a myth *tout court*, an obsession to which cartographic details keep being added and which by turns lures and disappoints its English would-be appropriators who obstinately keep up the search for it.

Hakluyt's papers, either published by himself in the same years or retrieved by Samuel Purchas and released later, offer many examples of this phenomenon, such as the Juan de Fuca story reported by Michael Lok (the same who provided the map of the Arctic regions in *Divers Voyages*), which appears in the third part of *Purchas his Pilgrimes*.[27] In this account of events supposed to have taken place between 1596 and 1602, it becomes very difficult to draw the line between fact and fiction, or between the myth, the myth-makers and the myth-believers. Indeed, Lok claims he met in Venice a Greek pilot named Juan de Fuca by the Spanish, but whose real name was Apostolos Valerianos and who said he had discovered and partly sailed the straits in 1592 between 47° and 48° N, using no more than a caravel and a pinnace in his enterprise. He offered to take the English there in less than thirty days, provided the expedition was financed by

them. Despite his writing to Robert Cecil, Walter Ralegh and Richard Hakluyt, Lok was unable to get financial backing for the expedition then or over the later years, until he lost contact with the pilot who had retired to his own homeland, the Ionian island of Cephalonia, possibly dying there in 1602.

Where does invention stop and where does the inventor's face begin to peer out of this fiction? As no records of a Juan de Fuca have been found in the Spanish archives, could we suspect that the entire story was a ploy used by Lok to revive faith in the Arctic expeditions that had already left him a ruined man? Or is it simply that Lok was once more fooled by a claimant discoverer of the passage? And could he not have met a man who had indeed found a strait and genuinely believed it was the Anian of so many esteemed cartographers and navigators? Was Juan de Fuca an impostor trying to sell back to the English their own Drake-inherited myth of one-upping the Spanish? Was he one more mythic hero to go with the geographic myth of the Anian? Or was he a genuine discoverer of a strait that he misnamed and misconstrued as a result of decades of erroneous representations and invented reports? As it is, a generous navigator from a much later period, Charles Barkley, discovering the area of Vancouver Island in 1787, decided to give Juan de Fuca the benefit of the doubt by naming after him the strait that he found at 47° N and whose entrance did resemble de Fuca's description in Lok's account. Thus at least the Juan de Fuca Strait eventually became a geographical fact, while Juan de Fuca himself may never have got there, or may even never have existed.

The same ambiguity imbues the later iterations of the Drake story, gathered long after his death by his nephew in *The World Encompassed*.[28] About three times as long as the first version of 'The Famous Voyage' in *Principall Navigations*, *The World Encompassed* offers an account of the northward venture that appears to settle some old doubts while at the same time creating new ones. Claiming on its title page to be a compilation of the accounts of Francis Fletcher and 'diuers others his followers', this version does confirm the journey up to 42° N mentioned in Hakluyt's 1589 text, while accommodating also the sudden change in the weather of the 1598–1600 edition: 'we came into 42. deg. of North latitude, where in the night following, we found such alteration of heate, into extreame and nipping cold, that our men in generall, did grieuously complaine thereof'.[29] Yet, the account proceeds to move well beyond the claims of both versions by assuring that Drake and his men kept progressing up to 48° N despite the extreme climatic conditions, but without finding trace of any strait at that latitude.[30] At this point the narration is interrupted by a long digression on the unlikelihood of ever finding a strait between the two continents, be it there or even anywhere further north, ending with this final statement: 'from these reasons we coniecture; that either there is no passage at all through these Northern coasts (which is most likely) or if there be that yet it is vnnauigable'.[31]

The affirmation sounds sensible in view of the relatively late date of the publication, at a time when the coast of northern California had been explored by the Spaniards following Drake's foray and the discovery claims inferred from it. Yet, if the cartographers' Anian had been forced much further north as a result of such explorations, Drake's own heroic myth had retained something of the Anian myth that it had incorporated on his return. The persistence of the Anian association can be felt in the Latin lines that accompany Drake's engraved portrait on the opening page of the volume: 'Drake perorati novit quem terminus orbis, / Et quem bis mundi vidit vterque Polus' ('Drake who is known to the end of the world throroughly described by him, / And whom both poles twice have seen').[32] The full report may well concede that Drake went no further south than the Magellan strait and did not find a way through the frozen north, and it may even conjecture that such a way possibly does not exist at all, but the Drake myth itself still needs the image of the map-conqueror, that of the superhuman whose exploits took him to both poles. Thus the Drake of later fame no longer occupies 'the (future infinitive) space of the credible', but the past perfect of the same, as he becomes the heroic spirit conjured for the purpose of 'calling upon this dull or effeminate age' as in the full title of Philip Nichols's 1626 *Sir Francis Drake Reuiued*, in which the same engraved portrait previously appeared.[33]

Geographic history is partly a history of literature and of literary myths. Such place names as Drake's Bay or Juan de Fuca's Strait on our modern maps bear witness to the imaginary puissance of the Anian myth and the lure of its quest for a generation of cartographers, travellers and travel liars. For many more generations, the Anian myth was so well remembered that as late as 1726 the use of the place names 'Pt° S^{r}. Francis Drake' and 'Streights of Annian' on the map of Brobdingnag helped the reader locate the fictional land of the good Giants in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.[34] As for the strait between the two continents whose myth had eschewed appropriation for so long and had instead appropriated so many minds, it was looked for so obsessively that it was finally discovered beyond dispute in 1741 at 66° N by Vitus Bering, an explorer who ironically did not come back to tell the tale.

3 'NOT NOW BELIEVED': THE TEXTUAL FATE OF THE BAFFIN AND BYLOT EXPEDITIONS (1615–16)

Catherine Bécasse

In the early decades of the seventeenth century, looking towards the west and across the Atlantic Ocean, the British attempted to set up permanent colonies in North America that could be used as stopovers on the way to 'Cathay', as Marco Polo had called China. For European merchants and nations, locating a direct waterway to the fabulous wealth of Asia would have been a tremendous commercial advantage, as finding this shortcut would also have implied avoiding the dangers of travelling across the Ottoman Empire. The sailors and explorers of Europe's most powerful maritime power, England, therefore made a point of proving to the rest of the world that their reputation was well deserved and that they could locate the Passage. Robert Bylot and William Baffin were among those explorers commissioned by the Northwest Company of London to find the elusive passage to the South Seas. The two men united their fates on board the *Discovery* in 1615 and 1616. In 1615 Bylot was appointed master of the ship, and Baffin served as his 'mate and assotiate',[1] then as his pilot in 1616. The chronicles Baffin wrote of these two expeditions up Hudson Strait and then Davis Strait were published in various, sometimes differing accounts and greeted with mixed, very often sceptical reactions, until Daines Barrington, an eighteenth-century lawyer and antiquarian, wrote across the map he wished to include in *The Possibility of Approaching the North Pole*: 'Baffin's Bay according to the relation of W. Baffin in 1616 but not now believed'.[2] Two centuries later, however, Captain John Ross was officially commissioned by the Admiralty to find the entrance to the Passage by 'exploring Baffin's Bay', and Ross readily acknowledged his debt to 'a worthy and able Navigator'.[3] In the beginning of the twentieth century, Sir Clements Robert Markham – himself an Arctic explorer and geographer – asserted in *The Lands of Silence* that 'Baffin's devoted zeal and untiring industry, his genius as an inventive observer, his gallantry and intrepidity, and his great services have secured for him a permanent and an honourable

place among the naval worthies of the Elizabethan era, side by side with Martin Frobisher and John Davis'.[4]

Historians have therefore been faced with an enigmatic figure of Arctic heroism, one whose truthfulness or reliability could be overtly questioned and yet whose reputation as one of the 'naval worthies' could also be retrieved from oblivion. How could such contradictory opinions be held? On which accounts did successive generations of explorers, cartographers and historians base their remarks? Why was Baffin's name finally chosen over Bylot's to refer to the island and the sea that *both* mariners had discovered? The purpose of this essay is to examine the original texts and their two subsequent editions to try and assess the two navigators' respective achievements. To begin with, I argue that geographical names may be misleading, and that they may be the result of a specific cultural context, which may distort the perception we have of what actually took place: Baffin's Bay is such a name, which tends to obliterate the role played by Bylot for reasons not founded on historical facts. But the fate of Baffin's name was also dependent on the vicissitudes of more global naming procedures, of which the editorial history of Baffin's accounts may be seen as an inevitable continuation. Baffin's 'hubristic' imposition of his patronym on the regions explored may indeed paradoxically explain why his name was also deleted from the maps printed after his death. I finally argue that the fate of Baffin's name was also determined by the narrative strategies adopted by Samuel Purchas in his third volume of *Hakluytus Posthumus* (1625) and by Luke Foxe in the narrative of his 1631 Arctic expedition (*North-West Fox*, 1635).

Reputation, Literacy, Self-Image

Several biographical elements may explain the prejudice against Robert Bylot, who in 1615 was in fact undertaking his fourth voyage to the Arctic. Bylot had first sailed as a navigator on board the *Discovery* from 1610 to 1611, with Henry Hudson as his captain. During this legendary voyage Bylot was made to replace Robert Juet whom Hudson had dismissed as his mate because of his rebellious attitude. As is well known, the expedition ended in tragedy: after a first aborted mutiny on 10 September 1610, the ship was grounded and frozen in from 1 November 1610 until 12 June 1611, when several sailors organized a successful second mutiny (22 June 1611), after which Hudson was cast adrift in a shallop with six men and his own son. Bylot, who had joined the rebellious party after having been downgraded to the rank of seaman, happened to be the only fit and able man left to steer the *Discovery* back to Gravesend in September 1611. Before he did so, however, he led the ship up to Hudson Strait, in search not of the unfortunate captain but of the Northwest Passage. Although he and the surviving eight crew members were examined by the masters of the Admiralty Court

upon their return, they were never punished.[5] The story of this now mythical voyage was recorded by one of the mutineers, Abacuk Pricket, and finally published by the Hakluyt Society in 1860.

This was not Bylot's only experience in the North before his encounter with Baffin. In April 1612, Thomas Button led the *Discovery* to Hudson's Bay, to rescue Hudson if possible but also to resume the quest for the Passage. Bylot and Pricket were onboard. Button returned five months later to report not having found any trace of Hudson or his companions. Though the mutiny episode had left a stain on Bylot's reputation, the man was nonetheless entrusted by the 'Governor and Company of the Merchants of London, Discoverers of the North-West Passage' to accompany William Gibbons on yet another expedition in 1613, which was brought to an abrupt halt because of the harsh weather conditions. But Bylot had by now gained a reputation as the most experienced Arctic navigator in England.[6] It was only natural therefore that we should find him again in April 1615, this time leading the *Discovery* on her fifth Arctic voyage. Baffin, who had just left the Muscovy Company, had been chosen as his pilot because he had served twice as chief pilot to lead a fleet of seven ships to Spitzbergen. The two men complemented each other fairly well, for if Bylot was almost illiterate, Baffin was well trained in log-keeping, account writing and map drawing.[7]

The entry Baffin wrote on 22 June 1615 illustrates his talent in celestial navigation:

> The next morne being fayre and cleare, and almost as stedy as on shore, it was no neede to bid me haue my instrument of variation in redynes to take the time of [the] moone's coming to the meridian, hauinge my quadrant redy to take the sonnes Almicanter, it being indifferent large, as of 4 foote semydiameter. I hauinge taken the uariation of my needle this forenoone and dyuers tymes before, which was 28…30'W. Nowe hauinge all things in redynes (for I had tyme jnough) for it would be after foure in the afternoon before any thinge could be done; so hauinge wayted till the moone was precisely on the meridian, and that instant tooke the height of the sonn, which was 26° 40'.[8]

In the same spirit, Baffin included in his relation of the voyage 'The Breefe Iournall of pertycular courses, latitudes, longitudes, windes, leagues run, and variation of the compas; from the navigator's autograph'[9] – four pages in which he gave the names of the places he and the rest of the crew had sailed through during the 1615 voyage, along with their geographical and nautical locations. As he wrote such lines, it may be suspected that Baffin may have been spurred by genuine pedagogical motivations as well as by a more narcissistic desire to project a favourable image of himself. That 'learned-vnlearnt mariner and mathematician', as Samuel Purchas was to call him,[10] was quite obviously keen not only on leaving a reliable record of how lunar observations could be used to calculate a ship's position, but also on leaving his individual signature in the history of the quest for the elusive passage.

It should be remembered here that Baffin was not the master of the *Discovery*. On 13 July 1615, after reaching the northeastern shore of Southampton Island, it was Bylot who decided not to proceed further north (up what Parry would later call Foxe Channel), and Baffin was very careful to make this clear to his readers:

> our Mr. named the poynte of land that was some 6 leagues to the northward of vs CAPE COMFORT. It lyeth in the latytude of 65de. 00' and is 85de. 20' west from LONDON ... we had proceeded on our course past 10 or 12 leagues, but we sawe the land trendinge from the cape, round aboute by the west tyll it bore north-east and by east, and very thick pestred with ice, and the further we proceeded the more ice and shoalder water, with smale show of any tyde. We seeing this, our mr. soon resolued theare could be no passadge in this place, and presently we bore vpp the healme and turned the ships head to the southward.[11]

Bylot cast anchor in Plymouth Sound on 8 September 1615 'without the loss of one man', a remarkable feat in itself.[12] Baffin insists however on the fact that both master and associate had returned to England confident that the Northwest Passage could be found, not hesitating this time to foreground his own personal opinion on the question:

> And now it may be that som expect I should give my opinion conserninge the passadge. To those my answere must be, that doubtless theare is a passadge. But within this strayte whome is called Hudson's Straytes, I am doubtfull, supposinge the contrarye. But whether there be or no, I will not affirme. But ... my judgement is, if any passadge within Resolution Iland, it is but som creeke or in lett; but the mayne will be vpp fretum Dauis.[13]

Such a positive report encouraged the trustees of the North West Company to man another expedition the following year. The *Discovery* left England on 26 March 1616 on her sixth voyage to the Arctic, again with Bylot at the helm and Baffin as his pilot and chronicler. They sailed up Davis Strait, traded with groups of Inuit on Greenland's coast, and on 12 July 1616 reached a large strait which they called James Lancaster Sound – the very opening that would encourage the nineteenth-century sponsors and navigators to renew the search. Yet Bylot and Baffin were less optimistic than on their previous voyage, and on 14 July 1616 Baffin expressed this disappointment, emphasizing this time the shared nature of the two men's opinion on the subject:

> On the twelfth day we were open of another great Sound, lying in the latitude of 74° 20', and we called it Sir James Lancaster's Sound; here our hope of passage began to be lesse euery day then other, for from this Sound to the southward wee had a ledge of ice betweene the shoare and vs, but cleare to the seaward, we kept close by this ledge of ice till the fourteenth day in the afternoone, by which time wee were in the latitude of 71° 16', and plainely perceiued the land to the southward of 70° 30'.[14]

Baffin could only confirm such impressions on 27 July 1616:

> wee were in the indraft of Cumberland Iles, and should know no certaintie, and hope of passage could be none.
>
> Now seeing that wee had made an end of our discouery, and the yeare being too farre spent to goe for the bottome of the bay to search for drest fines; therefore wee determined to goe for the coast of Groineland to see if we could get some refreshing for our men.[15]

Sick men and the impassable ice convinced Bylot and Baffin to return to England where they arrived safely on 30 August 1616. As if to make up for this relative failure, Baffin made sure the ship's sponsors grasped the full extent of what had been accomplished. The *Discovery* had sailed as far north as latitude 74° 20' and her crew had explored many unknown islands. But Baffin also took this opportunity to refashion himself into some kind of proto-anthropologist, notably by making comments about local behaviours on Womens Islands[16] (now part of the Upernavik archipelago), or trying to understand the natives' religion and burial practices:

> Concerning their religion I can little say; onely they haue a kinde of worship or adoration to the sunne, which continually they will point vnto, and strike their hand on their breast, crying 'Ilyout'; their dead they burie on the side of the hils, where they liue (which is commonly on small ilands), making a pile of stones ouer them, yet not so close but that wee might see the dead body, the aire being so piersing that it keepeth them from much stinking sauour. So likewise I haue seene their dogs buried in the same manner.[17]

We should keep in mind here that the letter of instructions to the pilot had set him exclusively geographical goals, so that entering into any transaction with the Inuit was certainly not a priority.[18] But if Baffin collected knowledge on the Arctic people, it was precisely because he wanted to convince the sponsors that the expedition had established that trading with the Greenlanders – an interesting, more or less 'civilized' people – should definitely be contemplated. He warned that pilfering should be avoided and barter used, while stressing that the goods to be swapped could be of little value to Englishmen, thus making exchanges potentially extremely profitable. Various entries for June 1616 show this concern, for instance on 15 June:

> there came two and fortie inhabitants in their boates or canoas, and gaue vs seale skinnes, and many peeces of the bone or horne of the sea vnicorne, and shewed vs diuers peeces of sea mors teeth, making signes that to the northward were many of them; in exchange thereof we gaue them small peeces of iron, glasse beads, and such like.[19]

Baffin remained aware however that such suggestions would not suffice, and that upon his return he would have to write a letter to the trustees to inform them

of their progress in finding the Passage. He concluded the letter he wrote to Sir John Wolstenholme with a clear assertion concerning his and Bylot's opinion as to the improbability of finding the Passage in Davis Strait. But he also took this opportunity to shift again to the first person to adopt the posture of a man well versed in spiritual matters, warning his contemporaries of the dangers of hubris:

> there is no passage nor hope of passage in the north of Dauis Straights. We hauing coasted all, or neere all the circumference thereof, and finde it to be no other then a great bay, as the voyage doth truly shew. Wherefore I cannot but much admire the worke of the Almightie, when I consider how vaine the best and chiefest hopes of men are in thinges vncertaine; and to speake of no other then of the hopeful passage to the North-West.[20]

Baffin knew of course that he could not end on such a negative statement, and he went on to detail the profits to be expected by English merchants in Davis Strait through the exploitation of whales, sealskins and walrus ivory. And indeed, as a result of this report, English sailors did start exploiting the lucrative resources listed by Baffin, and no further voyage in search of the Passage was patronized until Foxe fitted out his expedition in 1631. Baffin thus managed to project an extremely positive image of himself as adventurer and able seaman, but also as scientist, pedagogue, ethnographer, tradesman and diplomat. Finally, Baffin drew his contemporaries' admiration, dying a hero on 25 January 1622 while trying to drive the Portuguese from Ormuz in the Persian Gulf, a glorious end that Purchas's anti-Catholic tract duly mentioned.[21]

If Baffin's fate is relatively well documented, nothing is known about Bylot's life after he returned from his second Arctic expedition. His name is not even mentioned in the letter of instructions handed out by the North West Company for the 1616 voyage, which may confirm that the master of the *Discovery* was in fact nearly illiterate. As far as we know, Bylot never wrote a single line to explain his behaviour or give accounts of his explorations. It should therefore come as no surprise if Baffin's name alone remained connected with the Arctic voyages performed in that span of two years. A hero deserved more admiration than a man suspected of mutiny, and above all a man whose reputation rested on others' perception of his tumultuous life, not on the self-image he could fashion through a written account of his own accomplishments. The cultural context of the early seventeenth century may therefore explain how the name of a second-in-command almost immediately came to supersede his captain's and to impose itself on the records of Arctic discovery.

Arctic Palimpsests

This hesitation about whose name is to be remembered should also be placed within in a context of symbolic and editorial gestures characterized by an extreme volatility. Giving names to places was an important ritual in the age of exploration. Naming was of the utmost political import, as the nation that gave a name to an area could claim the region as its own. The map-maker therefore had a momentous role as the one who both offered a representation of the world and confirmed the ambitions of the nation's political leaders to the other nations. In a context of international rivalry between the Protestant and Catholic nations, maps could also become instruments designed to mislead the enemy and put a halt to their expansion. Furthermore, it was common practice for explorers to change the names formerly bestowed by discoverers from another country. Such habits only added to the confusion created by the multiplication of sometimes approximate maps. Baffin used such a context to goad John Wolstensholme's curiosity and kindle a resurgence in national pride:

> Neither would the vain-glorious Spaniard haue scattered abroad so many false maps and journals, if they had not beene confident of a passage this way; that if it had pleased God a passage had beene found, they might haue eclipsed the worthy prayse of the adventurers and true discouerers.[22]

Ironically enough, Baffin's fate was also to suffer from such practices, as the successive compilers were unsure whether they should lend credit to his maps and sketches. An illustration of Baffin's inconsequence may be found in what happened when the names of all the trustees had been used, and both he and Bylot opted for a naming technique based on local incidents. On 15 June 1616 Baffin remarks that the natives brought 'peeces of the bone or horne of the sea vnicorne ... peeces of sea mors teeth', 'by reason thereof we called this place Horne Sound'.[23] But despite the 'we' used on such occasions, it appears that Bylot never christened any area, an absence from symbolic rituals which seems to be confirmed by the simple fact that no area seems to have been given the master's name. His pilot, on the contrary, did not hesitate to put his stamp on the vast sea the *Discovery* was ploughing: bounded by Baffin Island in the west, Greenland in the east and Ellesmere Island in the north, Baffin Bay is 689,000 square kilometres, its name functioning as proof of the second-in-command's unusual authority, but also as a disturbing case of personal hubris.

This may to some extent explain why Baffin's name was eventually deleted from the maps of the region. Places that had been clearly identified and mapped became non-places in atlases as well as in people's imaginations, and Baffin's logs came to be regarded as fables which palimpsest-like could be easily scraped off and possibly used again for drawing new maps and inscribing new names. In his

1881 reprint of Baffin's log for the Hakluyt Society, Markham went over the doubts expressed by several explorers and geographers for two centuries. He emphasized notably that while Foxe printed Baffin's map in his 1635 quarto, Hondius showed a map 'entirely different', which was reproduced in Vischer's *Atlas* of 1651 as well as in that of De Wit (1680).[24] Markham went on to explain that in his 1720 *Atlas*, Moll

> gives Baffin's Bay, and Davis Strait, according to Luke Foxee; but also shows the coast line of Hondius by a shaded line, adding a legend – 'Some will have Baffin's Bay to run west, as far as this faint shadow'. Van Keulen (Amsterdam, 1726) was led into still greater confusion. He gives the outline from Hondius and De Wit, but repeats all the names of Baffin twice.[25]

Few cartographers had actually explored all the areas they sketched and named on their maps, so that they had to rely on previously published and very often misleading information. D'Anville (1761) followed De Wit, and Bowles (1765) copied D'Anville. However, Maltebrun's 1812 *Atlas* offered 'great improvement':

> A large bay is given northward, in a line with Davis Strait; the Cary Islands are placed close to the north coast, and there is no Hondius opening to Hudson's Bay. The Atlas of J. Thompson (Edinburgh, 1817) follows Maltebrun.[26]

In 1818, when official expeditions for the discovery of the Passage were resumed, Baffin's adventures had been relegated to the dark ages of Arctic exploration by Barrington, and the second secretary of the Admiralty, Sir John Barrow, published a circumpolar map from which Baffin's Bay had been entirely expunged.[27] But one year later, Ross concluded his report by paying tribute to his great predecessor:

> In re-discovering Baffin's Bay I have derived great additional pleasure from the reflection that I have placed in a fair light before the public the merits of a worthy man and able navigator, whose fate, like that of many others, it has not only been to have lost, by a combination of circumstances, the opportunity of acquiring during his lifetime the fame he deserved, but, could he have lived to the period, to have seen his discoveries expunged from the records of geography, and the bay with which his name is so fairly associated, treated as a phantom of the imagination.[28]

Ross's remark most probably had a self-serving purpose, as he too had become the victim of severe criticism. Indeed, his comments give the impression of drawing an implicit parallel between the fates of two great explorers whose reputations have been damaged by unfair treatment.[29] By the same token Ross's new maps also established the veracity and trustworthiness of what had been 'treated as a phantom of the imagination', while attributing to the sole figure of Baffin all the merits of discovery. As if to confirm this, in August 1821 William Parry, who had sailed through Lancaster Sound during the summer of 1819, bestowed the pilot's name to the largest island in Canada and the fifth largest in the world (Baffin Island is

507,451 square kilometres).[30] Baffin's name was definitely reintegrated into the hall of fame. If in 1849 Thomas Rundall printed the manuscript of the 1615 expedition for the Hakluyt Society by still introducing it as the 'Voyages of Bylot and Baffin', for the 1616 voyage he chose to reproduce Purchas's version of the expedition, whose title mentioned only Baffin's name.[31] As for Clements Markham, he also left out Bylot's name from the reprint he supervised for the Hakluyt Society, as if Baffin had served as the ship's true captain. He justified his bias by explaining that 'the record of those later achievements secures for him an honourable niche in England's temple of fame. He was a daring seaman, a scientific observer, and a great discoverer'.[32] In 1881 Markham went as far as to declare that 'there was nothing heroic about [Robert Bylot]'.[33] If naming the unknown was one of the most important rituals in exploration narratives, the story of Baffin's name shows how a navigator's name could also be simply written off history, the explorer's signature playing the paradoxical part of an unstable, unchartered territory, dependent on the vicissitudes inherent in the history of symbolic gestures.

Rewriting History

Inevitably, Baffin's contribution to Arctic history was not free from tampering. In his 1625 abridged version of Baffin's logs, Purchas, who was not a traveller himself, argued that the complete journals and maps 'were somewhat troublesome and too costly to insert':

> His Mappes and Tables would have much illustrated his Voyage, if trouble, and cost, and his owne despaire of passage that way, had not made us willing to content our selves with that Mappe following of that thrice learned ... Master Brigges.[34]

Based in part on Hakluyt's remaining manuscripts, which he had acquired around 1620, Purchas's narrative remained faithful to Baffin's style, keeping notably the first-person form. Still, the absence of maps contributed to making readers doubt the exactness of Baffin's description. Rundall recriminated against Purchas: 'Purchas, however, is blameable to a certain extent, for the meagreness of Baffin's journal'.[35] Markham added his own piece of criticism: 'unfortunately his tabulated journal [Baffin's four-page 'Breefe Iournall'] was injudiciously thrown aside by Purchas, into whose hands it fell'.[36] But these were not the only changes brought to Baffin's logs by their successive editors.

Foxe's 1635 narrative of his own expedition, *North-West Fox*, takes up less than half the volume (a quarto of 275 pages), the rest being devoted to other explorers' voyages. Foxe included a map showing Baffin's Bay, but he altered the narrative in several ways. It should be remembered here that in the Jacobean age readers were used to compilers taking some liberty with original manuscripts. Foxe's distortions, however, amounted to sheer rewriting. The most striking dif-

ference is the transformation of a first- into a third-person narrative. As a result, Foxe was led to omit all the passages that contained a measure of reported speech, notably the transcriptions of the conversations between the master and his pilot, which, incidentally, clearly illustrated how closely the two men had collaborated. For instance, in the original manuscript the entry for 17 May 1615 reads:

> My judgment was it would be best for vs to stand somewhat more north ward, to se if we could find any more likely place, for heare we could not disserne wheare to put in the ships head. Hee answered we weare as for to the north ward as the south of RESOLUTION ILAND, and now had all the south channel southward of vs.[37]

Foxe transformed the implicit dialogue into:

> This day [Baffin] came to firme Land of Ice as hee supposed, being in 61^{d} 16^{m}, the Latitude of the S. part [of] the Ile *Resolution*; then hee asked opinion concerning putting in amongst the Ice, saying the Sea was on the N. side of the South channel and much Ice hee must passe, and if he could get but 2 or 3 Leagues within the Ice, it would open every Tyde, and so hee should get something on his way, having all the channel to the S. of him; and, with this resolution, hee put in with E.N.E. wind.[38]

The reader loses the sense of the lively dialogue between Bylot and Baffin, which is rather annoying as the historian knows the crucial importance of communicational exchanges in the success – or failure – of voyages of discovery (much of the 1819 controversy about Ross's interrupted exploration of Baffin's Bay would stem precisely from the lack of communication between the captain, John Ross, and his second-in-command, William Parry). Moreover, the ambivalent pronoun 'hee' does not explicitly refer to one man or the other, which probably explains why Baffin was granted all the credit for the decisions and the discoveries that were made. Likewise, on 12 July 1615 Baffin wrote: 'this [a tide from the northward] pvt vs in great hope of a passage this waye, wherefore our Mr. named the poynte of land that was some 6 leagues to the northward of vs CAPE COMFORT'.[39] Foxe chooses to delete the pronoun 'us', insisting instead on Baffin's individual reactions: the flood 'newly revived his hope of a passage'.[40] In the rewritten relation of facts, the story changes: the sense of a collective enterprise and of a common ambition shared by the master, his pilot and the rest of the crew has been muffled.

Baffin's constant references to the search for the Passage were also obliterated, first by Purchas and then by Foxe. For instance, on 17 June 1615 Baffin justified a common decision thus:

> My answear and most of the companies was, that seeinge we are bound for discouery, it could not be our best waye to spend any tyme in search for these morse, they being so fearefull and beaten with the saluages[41].

But Purchas simply wrote:

> By the sixteenth day at noone we met with a great quantitie of Ice, lying some leagues within the point of Land; among the Ice we saw a great number of Sea Morse, not seeing any more in all the Straits but here, and these very fearefull, not suffering a Ship or Boat to come neere them'.[42]

The reminder of a superior mission to be accomplished is suppressed, and so is Baffin's anthropological remark concerning the natives' attitude towards walruses. Foxe merely notes: 'Lying still in the Ice, the weather close and hazy, as it had beene for 6 dayes, being neere a great company of Ilands (the winde West North West), he stood in amongst them',[43] deeming all other considerations insignificant. And yet the sense of an official, national enterprise had quite literally framed the original manuscript, a feature to which Foxe, caught as he was in the fierce competition between the London and Bristol merchants, and between himself and Thomas James (his great Bristol rival), seems to have remained impervious. Indeed, Baffin had entitled his account 'A true Relation of Such things as happened in the fourth Voyage for the Discoverie of the North-West Passage, performed in the yeere 1615', and in his concluding letter to Sir Wolstenholme, he had stated that 'the chiefe cause why wee spent so little time to seeke a Harbor was our great desire to performe the discouery',[44] the narrative of the two voyages being thus ensconced, as it were, within formal reminders of the official goal of the expeditions.

Even before he offered his narrative to read, Baffin had also used its title to put the emphasis on what had actually taken place. The choice of the verb 'happened' in the original title shows that he never intended to offer a description of the ship or of life onboard, but to record the historical facts of the ship's progress towards the Passage. All we know about the ship itself is rather vague: 'the good ship called the DISCOUERARE, beinge of the burthen of 55 tonn or theare aboute, (which ship had beene the three former voyages on the accion)'.[45] If Baffin inaccurately alludes to 'three former voyages' – the 1615 expedition was actually the ship's fifth – this may be explained by the fact that the second voyage in 1612 had been launched as a rescue attempt to find Hudson, not to discover the Northwest Passage, so that Baffin may have considered the trip as being of little significance in view of the grand project. Curiously enough, no official goal seems to have been set in the title chosen by Foxe, who not only left out the verb of historicity, 'happened', but also toned down the patriotic excitement implied in the purpose of the expedition. The story is introduced merely as 'The Voyage of Robert Bilot, set forth by Sir Dudley Diggs, Mr. Iohn Wolstenholme, Alderman Iones, 1615, in the Discovery, of 55 tunnes burthen. Written by William Baffine'.[46] And yet, even though Baffin never sought to represent his expedition as a national epic, he was quite obviously aware of the political and ideological dimensions of his mission.

Another example would be the entry for 2 June 1615. The crew intended to enquire how far north they could manage to sail in order to fulfil their mission,

hoping the Greenlanders would provide them with useful nautical or geographical data. But they also took this opportunity of an encounter with the Inuit to barter knives and trifles for whale fins, oil or any produce they might need to improve their daily lives.[47] Interestingly, such interest in trade was overemphasized by Purchas, who modified the quantity of whale bones from fourteen or fifteen to forty or fifty (in Foxe's account the figure was lowered to '30 or 40 Whale finnes').[48] Of course this may have been a misprint, but the London merchants interpreted Purchas's remark as an indication that considerable profits could be expected from commerce between Europeans and Greenlanders. Yet the initial motivation of Bylot and Baffin had not been to develop trade; they had been commissioned to find the Passage and, should they not be able to accomplish their mission, to help future explorers resume the quest equipped with more accurate maps. Purchas merely over-interpreted the text, using suggestions which were there but not given central weight.

Purchas and Foxe did more than alter figures or delete passages; they also changed some nautical data to make them accord with their own experience. For example the position of Cape Comfort is indicated in the original manuscript as lying 'in the latitude of 65de. 00' and is 85de. 20''.[49] The same latitude was mentioned in Purchas, but Foxe substituted his own measurements ('65°N, 86°10'W from London').[50] His concern for scientific accuracy can be praised since it shows that the mariner wanted his narrative to be useful to future navigators – he declared James to be an incompetent seaman. Nevertheless, this alteration of the original manuscript may also be read as an indication that Foxe was not bothered about editorial accuracy and was quite prepared to make Baffin's narrative serve his own purposes. This sometimes meant leaving out valuable ethnographical notations, such as the reason for giving out beads to the Greenlanders.[51] Baffin's observations departed from the classic habit of looking for analogies with English culture; the indigenous peoples had developed customs of their own upon which the chronicler passed no judgement. Baffin's relation was not totally devoid of ethnocentrism, but he showed genuine curiosity for other cultures and ways of life. On 1 June 1616, according to Foxe, Baffin's crew simply offered 'peeces of Iron and other trifles' to the Inuit.[52]

What complicated things further was that Purchas very much desired his book – at the time the largest ever written in the history of the English press – to appeal to a large (Protestant) reading public. So although he sought to be as concise as possible to reduce printing expenses, he did not hesitate to indulge in editorializing, as we have already seen. Further evidence of the narrator's presence can be found in the way he uses the imperative form, as in the following example: 'And note where I put this word true, I meane the true course, the variation of the Compasse, and other accidents allowed'.[53] Nothing of the sort can be found in the original manuscripts (or in Foxe's relation). A skilled narrator,

Purchas also intended to make the story as lively as possible, and for that matter resorted to stylistic devices shunned by the original author, justifying himself by arguing that Baffin was wanting in the 'art of words'.[54]

Purchas's authorial presence is sometimes curiously dramatized, claiming an intimacy with the explorers probably meant to compensate for his own lack of Arctic experience. Posing as a confidant who had actually heard their accounts from the explorers' own mouths, Purchas added in his concluding 'Briefe Discourse': 'Master Baffin told mee that they supposed the tyde from the North-West, about Digges Iland was misreported'.[55] There seems to be no evidence however that the two men had actually met. But Purchas's strategy of self-promotion may have contributed to convincing generations of mariners that the passage did not exist in the regions he had explored. Baffin's words – 'there is no passage nor hope of passage in the north of Dauis Straights'[56] – were interpreted as expressing 'his owne despair of a passage that way'.[57] Not only did Purchas omit the specific reference to Davis Straight, but he also added that Baffin intended to 'search the passage from Japan, by the coast of Asia (*qua data porta*) any way he could'.[58] Again, whether the conversation between the two men actually took place cannot be ascertained, but Purchas's comments may well have discouraged any further exploration by way of Davis Straight for two centuries. Foxe remained more matter-of-fact, but some passages still show some curious alterations. Such is the case for the entry dated 18 June 1616. Baffin's assertion that 'at diuers times we saw of the fishes with long hornes, many and often, which we call the sea vnicorne',[59] strangely becomes: 'hoping that hee might see many of those fishes with long hornes which they call Sea Vnicornes'.[60] Consistent with his desire to impose himself as a reliable observer, Foxe turned Baffin's description of facts into a fanciful dream.

When making an objective assessment of Bylot and Baffin's achievements, it must be said that the two men failed in several respects: they did not find the Northwest Passage, nor did they bring back any natives as the trustees of the Company had requested. Were Bylot and Baffin's expeditions merely two more 'voyages of delusion', illustrations of 'the ways in which men can delude themselves that the objects of their desires are easily attainable'?[61] I have tried to argue that historians need to pay closer attention to facts and to remain aware that the history of Arctic discovery is pre-eminently a textual construction, caught in various historically-determined contexts. So is the making of a name, whose fate, I hope to have demonstrated, is in fact an unstable construction dependent on a variety of sometimes diverging strategies, chosen or not. A study of the fortunes of a name also serves as an investigation into the reasons of another name's disappearance in the records. Bylot's skill as a navigator is but little conveyed by Baffin or by the successive compilers, and seldom acknowledged by historians. Yet, both Englishmen accomplished valuable geographical work, mapping the

area all the way to the north of Baffin Bay during their second expedition. Nor should Baffin and Bylot's achievements as ethnographers be discarded. Their scientific accomplishments were remarkable, and their conclusions also pointed the way to lucrative trade off the coast of Greenland. I argue as a consequence that Baffin's name should not be dissociated from Bylot's. Bylot was not a man who could fashion an image of himself through a written account, and one should remain aware of this limitation. If a navigator's name could be simply written off history, perhaps one should remember that this is after all the fate of all names. Baffin's reputation was firmly re-established only after Ross had proved the reliability of his observations. Names can be made and unmade. They are texts like all other texts: they can be scraped off, tampered with, distorted, rewritten, made to tell altogether different stories, believed or not believed.

4 GEORGE BEST'S ARCTIC MIRRORS: *A TRUE DISCOURSE OF THE LATE VOYAGES OF DISCOVERIE ... OF MARTIN FROBISHER* (1578)

Sophie Lemercier-Goddard

On 7 June 1576, Martin Frobisher set sail from London in search of the North-west Passage with two small barks and a pinnace, manned by a crew of thirty-four. Apart from the distressing loss of nearly a third of his company – the pinnace sank, one of the barks turned back to England and five men were abducted by a group of Inuit – the voyage was deemed a success. There was great hope that the newly found Frobisher's Strait would turn out to be the mythical Strait of Anian, thought to provide a quicker way to the riches of Cathay and a safe route for England to build its empire away from the Spanish and Portuguese spheres of influence. Back in London, a male Inuit captive excited considerable curiosity; and above all, the composition of a small black stone picked up as a souvenir was tested by gold assayers who pronounced it to contain gold, 'and that very ritchly for the quantity' according to George Best (who did not then sail with Martin Frobisher but wrote about the journey).[1] A second expedition was organized the next year, with the same barks, a much larger vessel, the *Aid*, 'one tall shippe of hir Majesties', and a crew of about 130 men.[2] Finally, in 1578 a fleet of fifteen ships with more than 400 men sailed to 'Meta Incognita', as the northern region named by the queen had come to be known. For his second and third voyages, Frobisher's instructions were to continue the quest for the passage, dig gold, and start a settlement for securing the exploitation of the mines.

After three years of costly investment, Frobisher had failed to accomplish any of those three goals.[3] The 'passage' Frobisher had found in 1576, confidently named 'Frobisher's Streytes, lyke as Magellanus at the south-weast ende of the worlde having discovered the passage to the South Sea,'[4] was eclipsed two years later when the fleet strayed into another passage that looked more promising. The powerful flow which madly tossed the ships about seemed to indicate a waterway that could only open onto the 'South Sea'. Though the new channel was identified as the true passage, it was thereafter referred to as the 'mistaken straytes', as Frobisher had initially thought, against the opinion of some of his

officers, that he was still sailing 'Frobisher's Strait'.[5] The uncapitalized name of the new passage reflected Frobisher's awkward realization that, having already given his name to a smaller waterway, he had lost the opportunity to erect himself as Magellan's contender for the northern hemisphere. In the end, both 'Frobisher's Strait' and the 'mistaken strait' – respectively Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island and Hudson Strait – would turn out to be dead ends. Frobisher's assumption that the lands on either side of Frobisher's Strait were the shores of Asia and America facing each other *was* of course equally wrong. As for the black ore shipped to England – 200 tons in 1577 and an astonishing 1,350 tons in 1578 – it eventually failed to yield any gold, and the stones ended up in fortification walls in Ireland and Kent.[6] Michael Lok, the treasurer of the Cathay Company – formed in 1577 to finance the second and third voyages – was left to incur the loss and was in and out of prison for debt for the next few years. Finally, the plan to leave one hundred men to secure the mines and develop trade with the natives was abandoned. The fleet was caught amidst 'mightye mountaines' of ice and the material that was to be used to build a house on the Countess of Warwick's Island sunk with one of the ships.[7]

In light of this poor record, it is easy to understand why the story of the British Empire has 'unremembered' early modern voyages to Newfoundland and Baffin Island.[8] Frobisher's voyages may have later faded in the national memory, overshadowed by Drake's flamboyant exploits, Raleigh's promises of gold and John Smith's adventures in Virginia, but in 1578, when George Best published a narrative of the three expeditions, his *True Discourse* went beyond the maritime journal or the promotional report to produce the first national chronicle of England's imperial ambitions.[9] A soldier of profession, Frobisher's second-in-command in 1577 and captain of the *Anne Frances* in 1578, Best – probably educated at Eton between 1565 and 1567 – composed an epic that pronounced England as the next global empire. As he sang the heroism of his countrymen, he also held up a political mirror that promoted a collective commitment to the commonwealth of England. But Best's 'bare and true accompte'[10] offers a richer vision than the promotional nature of his text could lead us to expect: rare voices are heard, revealing the Arctic to be a laboratory where English identities could be fashioned and tested.

An English Epic

In the 'Epistle Dedicatory', immediately after presenting himself as an 'insufficient writer', 'being willing rather to hazarde [his] owne shame' rather than have Frobisher's voyages unduly disregarded, Best introduced his topic in the following words:

> By this discourse, it may please your Honour to behold the greate industrie of oure present age, and the invicible mindes of our Englishe nation, who have never lefte anye

> worthy thing unattempted, nor anye parte almoste of the whole world unsearched, whome lately, neyther stormes of seas by long and tedious voyages, danger of darke fogs and hidden rockes in unknown coastes, congealed and frozen seas, with mountains of fleeting ise, nor yet present dayly before their face, coulde any white dismay, or cause to desiste from intended enterprises.[11]

Best showed no shortage of English pride for 'our Englishe nation'. The rest of the dedication praised the merits of 'the English', of 'our Englishmen', or 'our native country of England', and the foreign workers who were part of the expedition, among them the German mining experts Jonas Schutz and Burchard Kranach, were simply not mentioned. From this patriotic invocation emerged a type which would function as a model for future explorers: 'concerning the perfecter knowledge of the world, and geographical description, ... the Englishman deserveth chiefe honour above any other'.[12] The northernmost region of North America, 'discovered only by the English nation',[13] was thus presented as a natural area of expansion for this new race of men, a claim also supported by the distorted memory of the Cabots' expeditions: Sebastian Cabot, almost certainly born in Venice *c.* 1484 – a detail recorded in Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations* in 1589 – was 'nationalized' by the *Discourse*, made into 'an Englishman, and born in *Bristowe*' under the authority of Best's pen.[14] Such a patriotic outburst was of course a generic requirement for a formal dedication. Best's 'Epistle' was addressed to Sir Christopher Hatton, his personal benefactor (he kept Best in his household until his protégé's death in a duel in 1584) and a key investor in the Frobisher voyages. A favourite of Queen Elizabeth, Hatton had been made a member of the Privy Council and vice chamberlain of the royal household in 1577. And whereas the first voyage had been a venture secretly put together and financed by a few enthusiasts involved in their private capacity, Elizabeth had become in March 1577 the leading investor, turning the venture into a quasi-public enterprise.[15] Before the third voyage, the queen herself had received all the captains at court and placed a gold chain around Frobisher's neck, a ceremony Best duly recorded.[16]

But Best's patriotism went beyond rhetorical and literal flag-waving.[17] In the economy of exploration where high costs and innumerable dangers were to be offset by the similarly infinite number of profits – which Best painted in the opening inventory of his *Discourse* – the uncertain accomplishments of Frobisher's voyages led the chronicler to turn to a different kind of profit. It actually forged the pride it professed, offering both the state and the community the necessary conditions to develop a sense of nationhood: the battle against the odds was turned into a national cause of epic dimension, and the narrative sought to project an image of the Englishmen as mythic heroes. To the state, according to Best, Frobisher's voyages brought the substantial benefit of a reliable, well-trained armed force, ready to defend the country against a future enemy: 'hyr most excellent Majestie hath reaped no small profit, that she may now stand

assured, to have many more tried, able and sufficient men against time of need'.[18] To individual Englishmen who experienced a strong sense of local community in which kinship and neighbourhood ties generally prevailed,[19] Frobisher's voyages offered a narrative of English grandeur, with at its centre the larger-than-life figure of Frobisher, presented as 'a souldioure and an Englishman'.[20]

The third voyage in particular bristled with a sense of authority, epitomized in the insertion of several separate lists of regulations to be observed by the crew. But the itemized lists, repeatedly incorporated in the narrative – before the fleet's departure, at the onset of their abode in 'Meta Incognita', and finally before they set sail back to England – were also reminiscent of the epic genre with its customary inclusion of catalogues.[21] Frobisher himself was endowed with increased authority with each new proclamation, his stature growing as his name moved from the third line to the first, followed by more titles: from 'Captayne Frobisher Generall' to 'M. Frobisher Esquire, Captaine Generall for the Voyage to *Cataya*', to 'Martin Frobisher, Esquier, Captayne Generall of the Whole Fleete, appoynted for the northweast discoveries of *Cataya*'.[22] As for the general structure of the narrative, it complied with the simple rules of the epic plot line: although the Ulysses-like hero is relentlessly delayed by his enemies, he is never deterred from accomplishing his odyssey. In 1576, undaunted by the loss of his pinnace, the desertion of his second ship the *Michael*, two broken masts and persistent foul weather, Frobisher expressed his unflinching determination as he sailed towards the northwest, 'knowing that the sea at length must needes have an endyng'.[23]

It was therefore no coincidence if the discovery of the 'passage' was presented as the result of a powerful draw, the sea pulling Frobisher's ship in the right direction:

> sayling more northerlie alongst the coast he descried *a greate gutte, bay, or passage*, deviding as it were, two mayneland or continents asunder. There he met with store of exceeding great ise al this coast along, and coveting still to continue his course to the northwardes, was alwayes by contrarie winde deteyned overthwarte *these straytes*, and could not get beyonde.[24]

The unknown channel awaits its discoverer and lures him in, Best's *Discourse* opting here for a trope which suggests the hero's superior destiny. Before Frobisher's ship has even entered the ice-covered waters, the 'gutte, bay, or passage' has become the 'straits'. The explorer is henceforth turned into a direct descendant of Hercules: like the demigod known for reaching the 'west ende of the worlde' where he planted the famous two pillars marking the Strait of Gibraltar, Frobisher ventured into the western confines of the Atlantic world and became its new mythic hero.[25] The polar region was a fitting goal for this Elizabethan Hercules. The description of the pole as featured in Mercartor's map of the world

in 1569 – a space divided into four islands separated by four rivers 'running violently and delivering themselves into a monstrous receptacle and swallowing sincke'[26] – was reminiscent of Hades, a land of mist and gloom itself separated from the land of the living by the rivers Styx, Acheron, Lethe, Phlegethon and Eridanos. Frobisher's ambition to brave the 'deepe swallowing sinke into the bowels of the earth'[27] extends the Herculean analogy with a reference to Hercules's twelfth and most dangerous labour, when he defeats the three-headed Cerberus that guards the gates of the underworld.

A traveller and a conqueror, Hercules was an appropriate emblem of empire and his well-known episode with Queen Omphale made him a particularly suitable figure of both power and submission during Elizabeth's reign. Instead of the multitude of beasts, giants and extraordinary creatures which Hercules faced in his twelve labours, Frobisher braved but one formidable enemy, not the Inuit, the 'subtile traytors' who refused to fight,[28] but the ice. The frozen sea is depicted as a protean force, manoeuvering like a powerful combatant. It blocks the progress of the ships, encircles and separates them, heaves them above the water, and strikes decisively at times. In the third voyage, the ice seemed to conduct a deliberate attack on the ship that carried the materials needed for the house that was supposed to accommodate the first colony.[29] Against its continuous assault, Frobisher's fleet put up a fierce resistance, protected only by a makeshift armour:

> [The men] strengthened the sides of their ships with junckes of cables, beds, masts, planckes, and such like, whiche being hanged overboord, on the side of their shippes, mighte the better defende them from the outrageous sway and strokes of the said ise.[30]

The unequal fight recalls David's righteousness against the evil Goliath. Earlier, Best had reported that the unseen Catchoe, the Inuit 'governor or prince', was 'a man of higher stature far than any of our nation is'.[31] The motif of giants, represented by both the Inuit prince and the ice, together with Best's emphasis on the abundance of fish in the region, reactivated the myth of Britain's creation: Meta Incognita, like Albion when Brutus had first seen it, was an appealing land inhabited by a few giants and offering plentiful fish resources.[32]

Having enlisted heroic figures and some of the most common conventions of the epic, Best also adopted the distinctive voice of the speaker who in the epic is both the audience of the events he relates and a mediator with his readers.[33] An illustration of this rhetorical strategy is to be found in the narrative of the third voyage. Having been separated from the rest of the fleet, Best asked his carpenter to build a pinnace to explore the strait. Before embarking on the fragile boat made from bits and pieces – the carpenter himself declaring that he would not set foot on it for 500 pounds – Best hesitated. His attitude, he explains, was not due to fear but was rather the result of caution, as he did not want to appear headstrong and presumptuous before his readers, fearing how 'it might be afterwards spo-

ken ... (lo, he hathe followed his owne opinion and desperate resolutions, and so thereafter it has befallen him)'.[34] No longer a distant spectator, the reader is summoned on the stage, an immediate presence and an actor in the narration, influencing the course of events. Conveying both the action and the public's reception of the events, Best's voice becomes a collective utterance, in a comment that praises collective decision-making over brash individual impulses. The choice of the stylistic marker 'lo', unusual in oral speech or in the simple style,[35] further highlights the epic quality Best sought to give his *Discourse*.

And yet, in spite of Best's efforts to flesh out his formulaic flag-waving with mythological figures and allusions harking back to Britain's legendary foundation, the Arctic epic strikes a few discordant notes. Best's heroes are in fact simple sailors and officers, whose adventures sometimes verge on the mock-heroic, the *Discourse* mocking the common classical stereotypes of heroes and heroic literature to enhance the national character of Frobisher's accomplishments. In the Arctic, the English stood on a slippery slope, as when Frobisher and Christopher Hall, master of the *Gabriel* and an expert mariner, tried to seize two Inuit men but had to make an inglorious retreat:

> But the grounde underfeete being slipperie, with the snow on the side of the hill, thire handfast fayled, and their pray escaping, ranne awaye, and lightlye recovered their bowe and arrowes ... chased them to their boats, and hurte the generall [Frobisher] in the buttocke with an arrow[36]

The farcical overtones of the description evince Best's ironical and distanced stance. While the anecdote of Frobisher's pierced buttock could be read as an erudite reference to Aeneas when he is wounded in the thigh by an arrow in the final fight against the Latins, coming from a younger, well-connected officer, it sounds rather like a mocking jab at a sea dog of mixed reputation. Similarly, the ceremonies of possession, an essential part of the colonizing process, show the precariousness of Best's mythological construction. The ceremony performed on top of Hall's Island's highest hill included a solemn dedication to Lord Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warrick. The decorum of the occasion was however soon challenged when the English, who had repaired to their ships, saw the Inuit take over the same summit, shouting loudly 'like the mowing of bulls' and waving a flag of their own made of bladders.[37] To avoid further disturbance, the next ceremony of possession, on the southern shore which Frobisher believed to be the continent of America, took place in a deserted site 'without sighte of any people, or likelyhoode of habitation'.[38] But even then, the ceremony failed to convey the required solemnity: the slippery and perilous terrain, 'no lesse painful in clymbing, than dangerous in descending', again hindered the company's progress. The trivial, ever present, undercuts the Arctic epic.

Another example might be Best's treatment of Smith's Island, a small island where they found a mine of silver and the black ore thought to contain 'golde in good quantitie'. Curiously enough, Best prefers to dwell on the next small unnamed island, where 'a great dead fishe' was found. He carefully describes the narwhal's dimensions and its wreathed horn, which 'maye truly be thoughte to be the sea Unicorne', and even inserts a drawing. The horn, he explains, 'is to be seene and reserved as a jewel, by the Queens majesties commandment in hir wardrop of robes'.[39] While it is tempting to see Best's narratorial preference for the fish over the gold of Smith's Island as a fitting emblem for the early modern English empire which built its power on cod rather than gold,[40] the image of the new sceptre considerably undermines the pomp of the epic narrative. The queen's jewel, 'like in fashion to a taper made of wax', is but the tusk of a dead fish: even Best's remark about the ice which has allowed its preservation conjures up less the queen's wardrobe than the fishmonger's stall. The image of English heroism which Best's *Discourse* promoted had to remain credible to make readerly identification possible. His narrative's ambition was less to idealize the English type into an abstract image of heroism than to hold a mirror to the characteristics of his contemporaries.

Building a Commonwealth

In his exordium, Best went to great lengths to describe the many benefits that voyages of discovery brought to travellers and their fellow citizens. Together with 'the infinite treasure of pearle, gold and silver', many other pleasures could be drawn, like 'the sundry sights and shapes of strange beastes and fishes, the wonderful workes of nature, the different manners and fashions of diverse nations'.[41] The manners and fashions of the Inuit were however relegated to the end of *A True Discourse* and Best offered instead a description of his own people. In their colonial ventures in the new world, the English often looked at the Indians as a mirror image of themselves, aware that the strange ways of indigenous peoples helped them understand their own origins and identity.[42] In the Arctic, the dazzling whiteness of the ice transported the English not in the 'mare glaciale' that previous authors and travellers had described, but in a world utterly different and yet strangely familiar. Recurrent mirror images revealed a double strategy of appropriation and introspection.

Long before the first fences and houses were erected or the first gardens planted, analogy was the first step in establishing the legitimacy to take possession of the country.[43] Best was thus very anxious to demonstrate the climatic affinity between the Northern regions and his native England: the cool English climate, which did not allow Mediterranean plants to grow, was likened to the 'convenient, moderate and temperate heat' of the Polar region by virtue of the long summer days when the sun is 'during the time of these 6 moneths without

any offence or hinderaunce of the nighte'.[44] Meta Incognita could therefore be compared to the northern parts of Cornwall or Devonshire, similarly affected by northern winds.[45] The comparison suggested familiarization and appropriation. Though unknown and distant as its name suggested, Meta Incognita was now examined on a par with England's old-time counties, and the reference to England's two southernmost counties encouraged the reader to see the Arctic region as an extension of England's western perimeter. In a half-veiled allusion directed at the Spaniards, Best also noted that the northern shore of Meta Incognita enjoyed a more hospitable climate ('lesse store of snow, more grasse') than the southern shore,[46] a counterintuitive detail which preemptively dismissed any suspicion that the English might encroach upon the Spanish sphere of influence. A systematic imposition of English toponyms strenghthened this process of appropriation. As expected, Mount Warwick, Mount Oxford, the Queen's Foreland showed a conventional strategy of loyalty and ingratiation to the investors; Hatton's Headland, Best's Blessing, Fenton's Fortune,[47] revealing a distinctive taste for alliteration, probably helped produce a feeling of familiarity for the readers at home. Appropriation was all the more effective as the land was symbolically emptied of its inhabitants. The first Inuit were conveniently spotted at sea in their leather boats, 'small things fleeting in the sea afarre off',[48] while the English stood on top of a hill, the scene expediently reversing the positioning of each group. Omitting to mention the Inuit's twelve 'cuntry-like cottages' that the men inspected, Best clearly challenged their right to the land.[49]

The first English place of habitation in the Arctic was 'a small fort for our defence' on the Countess of Warwick's Island (today's Kodlunarn Island), whose very existence sought to turn the unknown into an image of the known. The fort was actually hardly a construction as it consisted of a trench on the corner of a cliff, surrounded on three sides by the sea and protected on the other side by 'caskes of earth',[50] but it was conceived as a replica of Albion. The topography and toponymy of the island conjoined to evoke the distant homeland in an expression of both nostalgia and appropriation. The snow-covered rocks, now enriched with the English sand or gravel which had been used as ballast in the vessel holds, provided a mirror image of the white cliffs of Dover. The name of the island, after Sir Ambrose Dudley's third wife, Anne Dudley, paid double homage to the queen: it honoured one of her close confidantes and being the only place in Frobisher's Strait to be named after a woman, it replicated the singularity of England's female monarch.[51] The fort, 'Bestes Bulwarke', was named after Best himself but it also possibly echoed the monarch's common designation as Good Queen Bess, encouraging further identification of the isolated and faraway island with an English outpost. Meta Incognita had been made into a mirror image of England.

Best also structured his narrative around a series of embedded scenes in which both Inuit and English could be observed observing each other, observer and observed incessantly changing places. At the centre of representation stood the 'family' formed by Kalicho, Arnaq and Nutaaq, the three unrelated Inuit captured during the second voyage. The English kept them under close surveillance, suspecting that their prisoners might take any opportunity to escape. Frosbisher's men were also motivated by a voyeuristic desire to understand the Inuit's relationship: to the mariners' astonishment, though the woman appeared to be a devoted companion, tending to Kalicho's needs and comfort, the relationship remained chaste.[52] But the English themselves were under the constant gaze of the Inuit who watched them watching their captured companions. Acutely aware of their presence, the travellers engaged in military training manoeuvres,[53] for both internal and external purposes: exercise kept the men's morale high, but it was also a display of power, meant both to impress the natives and to convey an image of strength and order to the English readership at home. In a dazzling mise en abyme, with the reader watching the Inuit watching the English watching the Inuit, Best's narrative suddenly lends itself to be read as a 'panopticon', which is also to say as 'a kind of laboratory of power'.[54] Indeed, the English travellers are portrayed as being constantly exposed to the gaze of a distant other, subjected both to the scrutiny of the Inuit and to the critical eye of their countrymen at home. For their own safety, Frobisher's men are also turned into visual objects, in particular when a delegation of Englishmen makes contact with the Inuit and the rest of the company is described as staying behind and watching the scene. This 'panoptic narrative' invites the English reader to observe simultaneously the Inuit and his fellow countrymen – without himself being seen. Best thus places the sailors upon a stage and holds up a mirror to his fellow countrymen.

Best's reflection of the travellers' actions in the colonial space was not only descriptive but prescriptive, showcasing the principles of Renaissance humanism. The tone was set in the very first line of the *Discourse*, when Best quotes Cicero and presents the voyages as both the manifestation and the accomplishment of the 'commonwealth':

> Man is borne not only to serve his owne turne (as Tullie sayeth), but his kinfolke, friends, and the common wealth especially, loke for some furtherance at hys handes, and some frutes of his laboure.[55]

As Best demonstrated, the settlements and trade activities exploration would generate ideally reconciled the two common understandings of the term 'common wealth', which is to say contributing to the growth of the country's wealth, but mostly forging a harmonious social order.[56] Accordingly, in Best's list of the benefits to be gained by 'our Englishmen's industries', gold and the discovery of the Passage were reduced to a fleeting hope at the end of a long list, behind the

more substantial advancement of knowledge, religion, and service to one's country.[57] That is profoundly why, I suggest, Best insists that the English never searched for gold but found it as a 'greate miracle of God'.[58] According to him, after the first expedition's return, one of the adventurers' wives had thrown a black stone from Meta Incognita into a fire and seen an intense gleaming light, upon which it had been decided to take the sample to mineralogists.[59] Back the next year to the island where the stone had been found, the miners could not however find any other stone of the same kind, which Best noted proved God's special providence as he had allowed the English to find the only piece available.[60]

Meta Incognita, a barren land of rock and tundra, might seem an unlikely candidate to foster the Edenic metaphors usually found in exploration narratives in the new world,[61] but the theme of the Inuit's innocence prevailed: even though the relations with the 'country people' quickly deteriorated, they were still described as chaste, musically gifted, 'exceedingly friendly and kinde harted',[62] and Best felt compelled to write that the land had no 'venemous serpent or other hurtefull thing'.[63] Against this Christian backdrop, Best presented Frobisher's voyages as a model of social control and concord: no mutiny or quarrel were reported and the queen herself, when she received Frobisher at court after the second voyage, 'praysed and rejoyced, that among them there was so good order of governement, so good agreement, everye man so ready in his calling'.[64] Best repeatedly stressed the communal effort of the group: when the fleet was literally assaulted by mountains of ice during a storm, 'every man within borde, both better and worse, had ynough to doe, with his handes to hale ropes, and with his eyes to looke out for daunger'.[65] Frobisher himself engaged in physical work digging alongside the miners to set an example for the rest of his men.[66]

Such happy harmony does not come as a surprise in a piece of promotional literature. More intriguing however is how social concord materialized in the mapping and naming of Meta Incognita. Alongside Mount Warwick, the Countess of Warwick's Island, Mount Oxford, Leicester's Island, the middling sort and the lower orders also put their mark on the landscape as the ships navigated through Beare's Sound, Jackman's Sound, Hall Sound, by Hall's Island or Smith's Island. Christopher Hall, master of the *Gabriel*, Charles Jackman, a mariner, Andrew Dyer, a master mate, and Richard Cox, the master gunner, were distinguished among 'other very carefull saylors' for their expertise in navigating between the treacherous floes of Frobisher's Strait. Nicholas Conyer, a Cornishman, was hailed for playing a Cornish trick on a recalcitrant Inuk, defeating him and restoring English honour.[67] Such a profusion of familiar and common English names mapping the land stood in sharp contrast to the ambivalence of the Latin expression 'Meta Incognita', a sign of power but also of impotence as the new land nominally retained its unknown character. Best's 'mirror', which produced the image of a community of men from diverse local and social origins

united towards the same objectives, shows the acute relevance of travel literature in the history of Elizabethan political thought. But how influential was Best's humanist discourse? Was this idealized vision of England a purely rhetorical strategy or did the experience in the Arctic effectively shape a sense of national identity among the mariners?

An English Cabinet of Curiosities

The loss of the bark *Dennys* that carried most of the materials and provisions needed for a year-long stay – including tons of beer – forced the expedition to abandon their plan to leave men on the island. The erection of a house was however maintained, even if it turned out to be a reduced version of the construction originally planned to shelter the first English settlement in North America. The limestone house constructed in August 1578 was presented as an experiment to test the resistance of English materials and building techniques to the Arctic winter, but it also fittingly encapsulated the expedition's uncertain achievements. In spite of Best's enthusiastic tone, none of the three official goals – exploration, gold extraction or colonization – had been fully achieved, and for all the pain and bravura displayed, only partial results had been obtained. The ice-ridden 'mistaken strait', the 'ships full of ore' and the house would all turn out to be mirages.

The house – the remains of which can still be seen – stood on the summit of the Countess of Warwick's Island, marking the official beginning of English colonization in the new world. About 1,200 miles to the south, on the English shore of Newfoundland, Englishmen from the West Country fisheries had been erecting cabins and wooden 'stages' to unload and process cod for a few decades already, but those had been temporary wooden structures.[68] The building of a stone house on the barren ground of Meta Incognita implied a very different approach. It gave off a sense of permanence, solidity and opulence, not unlike the 'prodigy houses' that were being built in England to honour the queen: one such house was Holdenby Hall in Northamptonshire, built between 1578 and 1583 by Sir Christopher Hatton, with the specific aim of entertaining the queen. The Arctic house also promised a subsequent return of the English. The highest construction on the island, visible from afar, it proclaimed to both the native inhabitants of the land and future overseas travellers the annexation of the region as an area of English expansion.

The house was not however an empty habitation. It became the receptacle to a variety of objects that were left there as gifts to the local population. Engravings of men and women, looking-glasses, whistles, pipes, bells, toys and knives were displayed inside the house; timber, barrels of seeds and provisions were buried outside. Bread was even left baking in the oven.[69] The house was in fact the last occurrence in a system of silent barter that the men had used with the

Inuit since their first skirmish in 1577. The Inuit would lay their goods on the ground, withdraw while the English did the same with theirs, then come back and either take the English merchandise or leave with their own goods if they deemed the exchange unfair.[70] In August 1578, the English left with their 'ships full of ore' and settled their accounts with the knick-knacks that adorned the house.[71] Setting up the house like a store window revealed a commercial rationale, presenting trade as a possible alternative to the gold hunt. But the display of objects went beyond a mere commercial purpose. At a time when the distribution of goods still mostly took place on the open market, and fixed-shop retailing was minimal and limited to a few products, the house pointed to a different practice from that of the shopkeeper.[72] The assortment of miscellanies and their mise-en-scène, 'the better to allure those brutish and uncivill people to courtesie',[73] evoked a revisited cabinet of curiosities, the first collection of rarities to be thus displayed in North America.

Like the famous collection of Rudolf II in Prague, the house on Kodlunarn Island presented man-made objects alongside samples from the natural world: artificialia, works of art and instruments, and naturalia.[74] But the aristocratic activity was revisited with a twist: instead of a collection of rare and exotic objects enclosed within the privacy of a princely home, the English selection was made up of commonplace goods, raw materials (timber, grain, provisions) and artefacts, from simple toys to the more valuable looking-glasses, exhibited in a place open to all. It is difficult to know exactly how the idea of the gift house was first conceived and who was involved in the project. Edward Fenton, the captain of the *Judith* and Frobisher's second-in-command, who was to be the governor of the projected colony, supervised the construction and presented it as his personal idea in his unpublished journal:

> I bestowed this daie at the Countesse of Warwiks Ilande ... further to follow the to [*sic*] finishing of a litle watche Tower I cawsed to be builded in the hight of the same Ilande with lyme and stone being xiiii foote in length and viii in bredthe with a litle rooffe covered with borde[75]

Nowhere in his journal did Fenton mention that the house was fitted out to display European objects. For someone who was so pleased with himself – he named the house 'fentons watche tower' – his silence over the objects would rather seem to suggest that as a well-educated and ambitious man who had served with Sir Henry Sidney in Ireland and published in 1569 *Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature*, a translation of Pierre Boaisteau Launay's *Histoires prodigieuses* (1567), he was not interested in trivia. And although Best presents the house as Captain Fenton's initiative, he uses, as he does throughout the narrative, the collective and broad 'we', a pronoun which in the *Discourse* alternately refers to the whole company (the house was built 'to the ende we might prove again

the next yeare, whether the snow coulde overwhelm it') or designates distinct subgroups like the mariners or the artisans ('We buried the timber', 'we fraight our ships', 'we sowed pease, corne and other graines').

The decision to display the artefacts more likely involved other workers, the masons, carpenters and cooks who had helped with the construction. For Frobisher's men knew of the princely pursuit, as is suggested by the narrative of the second expedition when the seamen find a dead narwhal on the shore and immediately recognize that such a rare natural object should find a place of honour in the queen's cabinet, 'to be seene and reserved as a jewel'.[76] In fact, as he enumerates the objects chosen to adorn the house, Best's paratactic style almost recreates the fairly democratic discussion that must have taken place among the crew: the blunt juxtaposition of sentences and short sentence fragments seems to mimic the men's haphazard suggestions as they assembled this rambling hotchpotch. With heterogeneity and the common sense of wonder that they thought each object would elicit among the Inuit as sole criteria, the mariners and artisans thus engaged in an aristocratic social practice that probably none of them had been associated with before. (If they had ever been, like the socially aspiring Captain Fenton, it had most probably been in a very different capacity, as spectators rather than collectors.)

What would have been a collection of commonplace objects in any other European context became a display of economic and cultural capital in the Arctic, meant to reflect the social and economic power of its owner. Both the aristocratic wonder cabinet and the mariners' collection functioned as instruments of domination: though the value of the former partly relied on privacy and exclusion, the knick-knack assortment on Kodlunarn Island intimated domination and military power, if only because it gave pride of place to sharpened knives and pictures of men on horseback. Fenton's house was thus the symbol of a strategy of distinction whereby common seamen hoped to enhance their social status. Indeed, assembling the display and determining which objects would most likely appeal to the natives involved a work of selection which also implied an aesthetic sense as well as an awareness of one's own cultural specificities. In the elusive search for the emergence of selfhood in the Renaissance,[77] Fenton's house therefore provides a rare example of self-representation outside the court. Life-writing forms, or country houses and palaces conceived to reflect their owners' personalities, were mostly confined to wealthy white men.[78] The wonder house on the contrary demonstrated a sense of collective self-awareness among the artisans, soldiers or labourers. Arranging the house prompted questions about how they could best convey their identity to the Arctic 'country people'. The house involved in fact more introspection and self-examination than Edward Fenton's own diary, which almost never departs from its focus on navigational conditions and the progress of the fleet.

The building and its content also reflected the economic affluence required to acquire such commodities. Colonial space was redefined as what Pierre Bourdieu would have called a socio-economic 'field',[79] with the house offering another illustration of the social mobility that accompanied geographical mobility in the age of discoveries. A knock-off imitation of the tastes of the dominant class, the wonder house proclaimed the domination of the English commoner over a new lower group (the Inuit), while it also marked a self-conscious distance from the upper class it sought to emulate. For if the wonder house, like a princely cabinet, targeted a very specific and limited public, the geographic distance effectively excluded the upper orders of society that were its usual practitioners and were de facto denied access to the mariners' collection. But the Arctic wonder house underwent a very different fate from that of the rich European collections that gave birth to some of the finest museums. It was a temporary display, sheltered in a makeshift construction that could not have lasted very long: in addition to the assaults of the Arctic winds and storms, the local population dismantled it down to its smallest boards and nails.[80]

Social mobility is not to be measured exclusively in terms of land property or inventories. In the debate over the openness of the elites in early modern England,[81] the Arctic watchtower erected by Frobisher's men offers an example of shifting *statutory* positions. The 'lower sort' briefly appear in a moment of social reconfiguration: the carpenters, masons, cooks – men who, according to Sir Thomas Smith, 'have no voice nor authoritie in our common wealth, and no account is made of them but onelie to be ruled, not to rule other'[82] – ceased to be passive subjects to be refashioned into active agents in the process of nation-making. They transformed 'fentons watche tower', conceived initially as a military outpost, into a stage where the gaze was no longer directed onto the outside but turned inside, to provide a still-life portrait of the English themselves. The watchtower, a symbol of vertical hierarchy and military conquest, became a symbol of change and movement when the structure and its contents were dismantled and disseminated. The brevity of this moment, both on the page and in reality, should of course warn us against any sweeping generalization. But the elusiveness of the event should also be balanced against the enduring influence and impact that the travellers enjoyed: on their return, merchants, mariners but also common seamen and labourers would gather in and around the port taverns and exchange information about their recent voyages. The episode of the watchtower was thus not only available to the readers of Best's *True Discourse* but would most likely have circulated orally.[83] The gift house became a site of identity performance where a mixed group of artisans and seamen projected their vision of themselves. The toys and bells, the seeds planted around the house and the engraving of men on horseback all conjured up a broad sketch of England as a stratified society still relying on an agrarian economy in spite of an emerging

market economy.[84] The building in itself spoke abundantly of the early modern fear of vagrancy: its very construction expressed a fear of nomadism, and echoed the consolidation of the Poor Laws during Elizabeth's reign.

But if the house projected a life-size mirror image of the English, it also encouraged the Inuit to look at themselves in contrast. Among the artificialia left inside were 'looking-glasses'. Those were probably convex glass mirrors, which had been imported into England as early as the fourteenth century and were by the sixteenth century relatively inexpensive items.[85] They were ideal trinkets: small and compact, easily shipped, looking-glasses had a relatively small value but still constituted a technological innovation outside Europe that was sure to inspire wonder. Because of their convex shape, those devices produced a distorted and miniaturized image of the object they reflected. The house thus projected two inversed images, like a two-sided mirror: outwardly it presented a life-size image of the English travellers, which itself included the diminutive image of the indigenous people. The contrast between the two differently scaled images symbolically captured the colonial nature of the encounter and how the English imagined the balance of power to be on their side. For Elizabethans who enjoyed the visual tricks of perspective paintings producing two different images whether viewed frontally or at an angle, and who saw mirrors less as toiletry items than prognostic objects predicting the political future,[86] the colonial symbolism of the mirror images they created was certainly not missed.

The house was therefore a polysemic sign, both a symbol of generosity and a threat, whereby the English announced that they were not occasional visitors but potential settlers who would come back to stay, possibly with their horses.[87] A manifestation of the dialectics of cultural exchange that exploration and colonization entailed, it is one of the few examples of non-elite discourse on identity. As the men tried to translate their expectations and hopes into visual and material terms, the house became a marker of identity, though by no means a fixed one. It appeared as a metonymy of English society at a given time, but also as a place of social transformation. That men who were supposed to build barracks to lodge colonists ended up with a wonder house reflects the social reshuffling at work in the colonial space. Away from the homeland, men from different social and geographical origins engaged in a practice that was unusual for men of their ranks. They were able, to some degree, to negotiate authority and order on their own terms.

Frobisher's uninhabited house perfectly epitomized the uncertainty of early English imperial expansion, when settlement was still mostly seen as the corollary of trade. The house's short-lived fate foreshadowed the repeated failures of England's first settlements, which remained unsustainable as long as the exigencies of trade and privateering prevailed over their geographic and topographic characteristics.[88] But Best's relation of Martin Frobisher's voyages also enables us to trace shifting and budding identities out in the field, to see how English

travellers negotiated their own identity beyond imperial politics. Best's *True Discourse* reveals competing discourses of identity: a patriotic and conventional celebration of Englishness in the form of an epic; a political vision of England as a commonwealth of virtue and concord; a fleeting performance of identity as an unidentified group of workers and seamen decided to showcase 'dyvers of [their] countrie'. In spite of its promotional agenda, Best's narrative failed to be completely hegemonic. Its nationalist discourse accommodates competing voices: between the lines of its narrative of imperial authority and triumph, it allows a rare glance at the anonymous actors of imperialism, how they saw themselves and envisaged their relationship with social superiors and peoples from distant lands. The rich mirror images of Best's *True Discourse* challenge us to see travel writing like the popular perspective paintings of the Renaissance: only oblique ways reveal a comprehensive view of early modern Atlantic adventures, and beyond the discourse of power, the complexity of life-changing encounters.

5 'A PEOPLE OF TRACTABLE CONVERSATION': A REAPPRAISAL OF DAVIS'S CONTRIBUTION TO ARCTIC SCHOLARSHIP (1585–7)

Marc-Antoine Mahieu and Mickaël Popelard

Compared to other Elizabethan mariners who also engaged in exploratory voyages and maritime expeditions, such as Martin Frobisher, Sir Francis Drake or Sir Walter Ralegh, John Davis has received surprisingly little attention in recent years. In her recent book about early modern voyages and English travel narratives, Mary Fuller devotes ample space to Frobisher's voyages but makes only two passing remarks about John Davis, whose name features only once in her introductory chapter about 'the English Worthies'; in a similar fashion, Robert McGhee acknowledges that Davis outmatched Frobisher in terms of both his sailing and cartographic skills, and yet his brief comments on Davis's three expeditions are confined to the end of his chapter on 'Martin Frobisher's Gold Mines'.[1] If, as Fuller explains, 'the celebration of a "heroic Age of Discovery" depends on a number of deliberate and specific omissions – in other words on remembering some things and forgetting others', then it seems fair to say that John Davis's early contribution to the discovery of the Northwest Passage has often been 'forgotten' by the historians of the field. Fuller goes on to remind her readers that:

> Forgetting may be ideological, and operate along the lines of particular interests; it can result from a deliberate suppression of certain memories or histories. It is also a function of narrative. To tell a story, one creates a frame, a beginning and end and a central line that moves from one to the other. Likewise, as a history is composed, some things will be brought to the center and some moved to the side, or off the margins of the page altogether.[2]

In John Davis's case, 'the suppression of memories' does not appear to be ideological and it probably does not 'operate along the lines of particular interests' either. But it can be argued that as the story of the Northwest Passage was written and re-written by historians, John Davis's important contribution to the quest for the Northwest Passage was increasingly moved to the margins of the page, if not pushed off the page altogether. It will be the aim of this paper to

suggest that Davis should be brought back to the centre of the narrative, if only to restore some historical balance with Frobisher.[3] It is true that Davis failed to reach his intended goal and never discovered the Passage to Cathay – which he still believed to be 'most probable' after his third and last voyage in 1587. But so did Frobisher, whose three voyages may be described as geographic and economic fiascos. In that regard, Davis proved more successful than Frobisher since he unwittingly discovered the key to the Northwest Passage by reaching Sanderson's Hope – present-day Upernavik – at latitude 72° 46'. We would like to suggest that the real legacy and import of Davis's three northern voyages lie in his scientific approach, which characterized both his navigational techniques and his description of the Inuit. For Davis was not just the author of *The Seamans Secret* or the inventor of the 'backstaff', an instrument that made it easier for mariners to 'shoot the sun'. He also described the natives he encountered with such open-mindedness and objectivity that his account of the Greenlanders has been seen with some justification as the 'first ethnological notes of any consequence' made about the Inuit.[4]

John Davis was born into a yeoman family in 1543 and grew up in Sandridge near Dartmouth, on the right bank of the river Dart. After qualifying as a master mariner in the late 1570s, he embarked on a successful career as a privateersman and a shipmaster. He finally retired at the rather early age of thirty-six, only to be recruited by Adrian Gilbert to take part in a fresh attempt at finding the Northwest Passage, less than ten years after Martin Frobisher's first foray into the Arctic. There is conclusive evidence that Davis met the philosopher and mathematician John Dee at his house in Mortlake in January 1583 to prepare a new voyage into the Arctic, in the presence of Adrian Gilbert and Secretary Walsingham. Dee believed that three of the five existing passages from Europe to Cathay were yet to be discovered: in addition to the Northeast Passage – the search for which had hitherto been the preserve of the Muscovy Company – there still remained the Northwest Passage and the route over the pole, which he believed were to make it possible for English 'princes to possess the wealth of all the East parts', as Sir Humphrey Gilbert put it in his *Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataia* (1576).[5] Adrian Gilbert and his associates were granted a patent by the queen to sail 'Northwestward, Northeastward or Northward' and they enlisted the financial support of a rich merchant, William Sanderson, who had developed a strong interest in maritime expeditions and scientific instruments, including celestial and terrestrial globes. According to Samuel Eliot Morison, who relies on the testimony of John Janes – the chronicler of the first and third voyages – it was Sanderson who persuaded the associates to appoint 'one Mr. John Davis, a man well grounded in the principles of the arte of navigation, for Captain and chief Pilot of the exploit'.[6] Having been granted the royal patent in February 1585, Davis was able to embark on his first northern voyage in June.[7]

Davis's attempts at discovering the Passage have survived in the form of the narratives written by Janes, who happened to be Sanderson's nephew. His two accounts were published by Richard Hakluyt in his *Principall Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589). The report on the second voyage was written by Davis himself and was also printed in Hakluyt's collection of travel narratives. We shall examine this second account at greater length because it contains Davis's list of Inuit words, which we believe is pivotal to the reassessment of Davis's role and importance in the history of Arctic exploration.

Like Thomas Harriot's *Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588) or some of Montaigne's most famous *essais* – such as 'Des cannibales' or 'Des coches' – Davis's notes constitute a fine example of pre-ethnography. Of course, not all the comments made by Davis and Janes were devoid of a sense of cultural superiority. Yet, on reading their reports, one cannot fail to be struck by the explorers' relatively unprejudiced tone as they describe the natives' mutual solicitude or even their fundamental honesty. It is true that Davis sometimes seems to contradict himself: commenting on the Inuit's apparent passion for iron – which caused them to steal the ship's anchor – Davis felt bound to denounce their 'vile nature'. But both Davis and Janes display a genuine interest in the Arctic people with whom they interacted. Failing to find a new maritime route to China, Davis appears to have turned part of his attention to the Inuit instead. The Inuit often take pride of place and it looks as if the description of their mores had been substituted for the traditional list of profitable 'commodities' that can be found in so many travel narratives. This is all the more remarkable as the quest for a Northwest or Northeast maritime route to China partly originated in the English merchants' desire to remedy their financial woes after the cloth trade with Antwerp and the Low Countries had become less profitable.[8] What is more, Davis did not content himself with listing their drinking and eating habits, or 'the many little images' and diverse cultural artefacts they produced. Our main contention is that Davis also approached their language with linguistic acuity.

Encountering 'very tractable people': Arctic Pre-Ethnography

Davis set sail in June 1585 with a total crew of forty-two. He was the captain of a ship called the *Sunshine* while the other ship, the *Moonshine*, was under the command of one William Bruton. John Janes was Davis's supercargo and a member of the *Sunshine*'s crew. Davis and his men sighted Greenland for the first time on 20 July. He seems to have been far from favourably impressed if one is to judge by the name he chose to give it:

> The 20. as we sayled along the coast the fogge brake up, and we discovered the land, which was the most deformed rockie and montainous land that ever we saw ... the shoare beset with yce a league off into the sea, making such yrksome noyse as that it seemed to be the true patterne of desolation, and after the same our Captain named it, The Land of Desolation.[9]

Davis and his men then turned Cape Farewell (Uummannarsuaq) without trying to explore the coast and entered what is now the fjord of Nuuk (Nuup Kangerlua, previously Godthaab Fjord), which Davis named 'Gilbert Sound', at latitude 64° 11'. It was there that they first encountered a group of Inuit. If the very first contact proved a little baffling and rather disconcerting, Janes tells us that surprise and diffidence rapidly gave way to 'many signs of friendship':

> The Captain, the Master and I, being got up to the top of an high rock, the people of the countrey having espied us, made a lamentable noise, as we thought, with great outcries and skreechings: we hearing them, thought it had been the howling of wolves … Whereupon M. Bruton and the Master of his shippe, with others of their company, made great haste towards us, and brought our Musicians with them from our shippe, purposing either by force to rescue us, if need should so require, or with courtesie to allure the people. When they came unto us, we caused our Musicians to play, ourselves dancing, and making many signs of friendship.[10]

It is perhaps significant that the first interaction between the two parties should have taken such a musical form as this scene may be said to set the tone for Davis's subsequent encounters with the different groups of Inuit he met. On the whole, it seems that concord prevailed over disharmony, though it is important not to oversimplify the necessarily complex and ambivalent feelings that both sides mutually experienced towards the other party. It should also be noted that, from the start, the Inuit's 'speech' and their 'pronunciation' aroused Janes's linguistic curiosity: 'their pronunciation was very hollow thorow the throat, and their speech such as we could not understand'.[11] If Frobisher's first contact with the natives gave rise to a display of gymnastic virtuosity on the part of the Inuit,[12] in Davis's case the first encounter between the explorers and the natives concluded with music, dancing and a scene of rejoicing: 'one of them came on shoare, to whom we threw our cappes, stockings and gloves, and such other things as then we had about us, playing with our musicke, and making signes of joy, and dauncing'.[13]

In the rest of his narrative, Janes often insists on the feelings of 'trust' and 'familiarity' that gradually developed between the two groups. On the second day, the English gained the trust of the Inuit by mimicking their attitudes and 'swearing by the sun after their fashion': 'so I shook hands with one of them, and he kissed my hand, and we were very familiar with them. We were in so great credit with them upon this single aquaintance, that we could have anything they had'.[14] Much like Thomas Harriot, who also admired the ingenuity of the native Algonkians,[15] Janes marvelled at the skill of the Inuit. In particular, he showed deep interest in their fine – and warm – sealskin buskins, gloves and hoses, for which he willingly exchanged his much less comfortable clothes, 'all being commonly sowed and well dressed: so that we were fully perswaded they have divers artificers among them'.[16] In fact, except for their religion[17] – or lack thereof – Janes did not find anything wrong with them, as can be seen from the following description of the first group he came into contact with: 'they tooke great care

one of another … They are very tractable people, void of craft or double dealing, and easie to be brought to any civility or good order: but we judge them to be idolaters and to worship the Sunne'.[18]

Leaving the fjord of Nuuk on 1 August 1585, Davis and his men proceeded on their quest for the Passage, crossing the strait from Greenland to Baffin Island (i.e. Davis Strait) and anchoring their ships in Exeter Sound under a mount they called Mount Ralegh. They found the latitude to be 66° 40' and the sea to be 'altogether void from the pester of ice'. The land was also devoid of any Inuit, though it was home to many white bears, which the English hunted and killed before departing. This was the northernmost point that Davis reached in the course of his first voyage and on 8 August they set sail southward and doubled the cape of Cumberland Peninsula – which they named Cape God's Mercy, 'as being the place of our first entrance for the discovery'.[19] They then entered a deep sound – Cumberland Sound (Kangiqtualuk) – and seeing that the water was 'of the very colour, nature and quality of the maine ocean', they thought that they had finally discovered the entrance to the Passage. However, they did not have the time to confirm, or rather disprove, their (erroneous) theory as they contented themselves with sailing up and down the sound for four days. On 14 August, they went ashore but could not establish contact with the Inuit. This was the same group of Inuit that Frobisher had met less than ten years before and Samuel E. Morison's suggestion that they 'remembered Frobisher's kidnapping' and 'kept out of sight' seems more than likely.[20] Davis and his men heard dogs howling and they found a few cultural artefacts, which Janes described in some detail,[21] but they were not to see the Inuit again for the rest of their voyage. On 24 August, they finally resolved to sail home and they reached Dartmouth on 30 September 1585.

Davis's second voyage began on 7 May 1586 with a fleet of four ships, two of which (the *Sunnshine* and the *North Starre*) were to go their own way and explore the straight-over-the-pole route. They did so, but met with little success – as one can easily surmise. The other two ships, the *Mermayd* and the *Moonshine,* were to resume their quest for the Northwest Passage with John Davis leading the way on the *Mermayd*. Doubling Cape Farewell, Davis returned to the area of modern Nuuk, where he met the same Inuit with whom the English had played music the year before. Though the account of the second voyage was written by Davis himself, it may be noted that he used the exact same words as Janes had done in his own narrative, describing the Inuit as 'a people of *tractable* conversation'.[22] Like Janes, Davis also insisted on the fact that the English had formed a true friendship with the Inuit and he depicted the hearty welcome they were given as soon as they landed:

> But after they had espied in the boat some of our company that were the year before here with us, they presently rowed to the boat, and took hold on the oar, and hung about the boat with such comfortable joy, as would require a long discourse to be uttered: they came with the boates to our ships making signs that they knew all those that the year before had been with them. After I perceived their joy and small fear of us, myself with

> the Merchants & others of the company went ashore, bearing with me twenty knives: I had no sooner landed, but they leapt out of their canoes and came running to me and the rest, and embraced us with many signs of hearty welcome: at this present there were eighteen of them, and to each of them I gave a knife: they offered skins to me for reward, but I made signs that they were not sold, but given them of courtesy.[23]

That Davis was genuinely interested in the Inuit's way of life is evidenced by the rest of his narrative, for he then set about exploring the land and 'searching for the habitation of this people'.[24] Instructing some of his men to inspect the country, he made it clear that they should neither shoot at nor injure the people in any way. If Davis's narrative is anything to go by, the first days of his stay in Gilbert Sound seem to have been almost entirely taken up by various exploratory missions. On 3 July, Davis explored another sound 'where the people by signs willed me to go, hoping to find their habitation: at length they made signs that I should go into a warm place to sleep, at which place I went on shore'.[25] More often than not, the explorers turned into friends, sharing the Inuit's games and participating in their leisure activities, as when the English engaged in a wrestling contest with the natives. Because the Inuit kept following the English about, Davis 'was desirous to have our men leap with them, which was done, but our men did overleape them: from leaping they went to wrestling, found them strong and nimble'.[26] Having achieved such a degree of familiarity with the Inuit, it should come as no surprise that Davis was able to describe the natives with more objectivity than Frobisher, whose men, it will be remembered, famously stripped an old woman of her clothes to 'see if she were cloven-footed'.[27] The following description bears witness to Davis's comparatively neutral, almost pre-ethnographic tone. It should be noted that Davis never presented the Inuit as deformed or devilish creatures, as Settle had done with the elderly Inuk. True, Davis also acknowledged that the natives were sometimes given to practising witchcraft. But his tone is considerably more balanced and cautious than Settle's, and his physical description of the Inuit sounds emotionally disengaged and as factual as was possible for a late-sixteenth-century observer:

> The people are of good stature, well in body proportioned, with small slender hands and feet, with broad visages, and small eyes, wide mouthes, the most part unbearded, great lips, and close toothed. Their custom is as often as they go from us, still at their returne to make a new truce, in this sort, holding his hand up to the Sun with a loud voice he crieth Ylyaoute, and striketh his brest with like signs, being promised safety, he giveth credit. These people are much given to bleed, and therefore stop their noses with deeres hair, or the haire of an elan. They are idolaters and have images great stores, which they weare about them, and in their boats, which we suppose they worship. They are witches, and have many kinds of inchantments, which they often used, but to small purpose, thanks be to God.[28]

This is not to say that Davis never behaved in a partial way or that he proved always immune to ethnocentric feelings. Being invited to witness what the Eng-

lish believed to be a sacrificial ceremony, Davis ordered one of his men to put out the fire and 'spurne it into the sea, which was done to shew them that we did contemne their sorcery'.[29] This was hardly the response characteristic of a detached ethnographer dealing with a shamanistic ritual. In this, he was no different from most of his contemporaries who could not 'recognize the validity of Indian society' (or Inuit society, for that matter) 'in its own terms – something beyond sixteenth century thinking'.[30] What really caused Davis to lose his temper was the Inuit's repeated attempts to steal iron – something to which a ship captain in a hostile environment could not turn a blind eye. Essentializing their 'nature', Davis judged that the Inuit:

> ... were marveilous theevish, especially for iron, which they have in great account. They began through our lenity to show their vile nature: they began to cut our cables: they cut away the Moonlight's boat from her stern, they cut our cloth where it lay to air ... they stole our oares, a caliver, a boar speare, a sword, with diverse other things.[31]

Yet, at the same time, Davis prevented his crew from retaliating and harming the natives, and he soon regained his calm, especially after the Inuit had brought the English sealskins as a token of restored amity. But, Davis continued:

> Seeing iron they could in no wise forbeare stealing: which when I perceived it did but minister unto me an occasion of laughter to see their simplicity, and I willed that in no case they should be any more hardly used, but that our own company should be the more vigilant to keep their things, supposing it to be very hard in so short time to make them know their evils.[32]

It was at this point that Davis inserted his famous list of Inuit words into his narrative, to be commented upon later in this chapter. This passage is also interesting because it suggests that Davis was convinced that the Inuit could ultimately be made to 'know their evils' – provided the English were given more time to educate them. According to Quinn, this belief in the natives' perfectibility was one of the key differences separating those who thought that the 'civilized' and 'the savage' were 'two distinct and mutually incompatible categories of human beings, the former incapable of being raised to the level of the latter', from those who held the opposite view that the Indians – or the Inuit – were 'by nature capable of reaching a level of civilization comparable with that of the English'.[33] Like Harriot, but unlike Frobisher,[34] Davis probably belonged to the latter category. In fact, his narrative clearly reveals that he was considerably more open-minded and sensitive to cultural differences than the rest of his men who complained that 'his lenity' and 'friendly using' caused the Inuit to misbehave, giving them 'stomacke to mischief'. This is one of the rare instances when the reader may actually hear two very distinct voices in the narrative as Davis gives a verbatim account of the conversation he had with his men, using direct speech:

> Our Mariners complained heavily against the people, and said that my lenitie and friendly using of them gave them stomacke to mischief: for they have stolen an anchor from us, they have cut our cable very dangerously, they have cut our boats from our sterne, and now since your departure, with slings they spare us not with stones of halfe a pound weight: and will you still indure these injuries? It is a shame to beare them. I desired them to be content, and said, I doubted not but al should be wel.[35]

However, all did not go well, for the Inuit started slinging stones at the *Moonlight*, with the result that Davis eventually lost his temper for good. For all Davis's lenity, his patience and understanding had certain limits: 'whereat being moved, I changed my curtesie, and grew to hatred'.[36] He pursued the Inuit in his boat but never caught up with them as they manoeuvered their kayaks much too swiftly. On the following day, however, the natives offered to conclude a new truce with the English and Davis kept one of the emissaries as a hostage for the anchor the Inuit had stolen. Yet, when the wind started to blow in a favourable direction, Davis decided that they should set sail immediately and the English took the Inuk with them. Like Frobisher, Davis therefore abducted a native inhabitant, but unlike his predecessor he had not planned the kidnapping, at least if we are to believe him: 'then we pointed to him and his fellowes for our anchor, which being had, we made signs that he should be set at libertie'.[37] Whereas Frobisher's captive bit his tongue in two so as not to communicate with his enemies, Davis's hostage, we are told, became 'a pleasant companion among [them]' – yet another sign that Davis probably managed to interact with the Inuk in a more competent way than Frobisher did. Relating an episode from Frobisher's second voyage, Settle judged the Inuit 'to be altogether voyde of humanitie and ignorant of what mercy meaneth'.[38] Davis and Janes, on the contrary, never doubted that the Inuit were human beings and that they should be treated as such.

Reaching the area of present-day Sisimiut, at latitude 66° 33' on the west coast of Greenland, the fleet split, with the *Moonshine* continuing its search for the Passage while the *Mermaid* began her homeward voyage. In this area, Davis met another group of Inuit. He observed them carefully enough to notice some linguistic differences: 'they differ not from the other, neither in their canoes nor apparel, yet is their pronunciation more plain than the others, and nothing hollow in the throat'.[39] Davis then sailed southward and the end of his second voyage was comparatively uneventful, except for a short – and dangerous – encounter with natives off the coast of Labrador, in latitude 56°.[40] The *Moonshine* finally arrived in the West Country at the beginning of October, after a voyage of five months.

In many respects, Davis's third voyage was a repetition of his previous two expeditions, and it is not necessary for us to discuss it in extensive detail. Suffice it to say that Davis's purpose was to explore the northern part of Davis Strait – which later came to be known as Baffin Bay – in the hope that he could find the entrance to the Passage there. Davis visited some of the sites he had already explored on his previous voyages, including Gilbert Sound, Exeter Sound, Cumberland Sound and the Cape of God's Mercy. But he also visited places to which

he had never been, such as the modern Upernavik, at latitude 72° 46' on the west coast of Greenland. This was Davis's furthest north and he named the place Sanderson's Hope, coming very close to discovering the actual entrance to the Northwest Passage, Lancaster Sound, between Devon Island and Baffin Island. Davis and his men did meet some Inuit in the course of their third voyage, but the novelty of the first encounters had worn off by now, and Janes's narrative contains little new information in the way of the Inuit's language or way of life.

Reappraising Davis's Linguistic Contribution to Inuitology

Before discussing the list of words that Davis inserted into his narrative, it is important to turn the perspective around in order to get a clearer idea about who were the Inuit that Davis met in the course of his three voyages. The ancestors of the modern Inuit started leaving Alaska between AD 1000 and AD 1200, entering and, for some of them, settling down in the western Central Arctic before reaching the eastern Arctic and Greenland. Those migrants spoke the language ancestral to the present-day Inuit dialects, which is reconstructed by linguists under the name of Proto-Inuit.[41] Thanks to the new culture they had developed (known as the Thule or Neo-Eskimo culture), they moved quickly and efficiently across the continent, which accounts for the surprising homogeneity of their dialect continuum. In some areas on their way eastwards, Thule Inuit met and assimilated the descendants of the Paleo-Eskimo populations. Preceding the Thule Inuit by about two thousand years, the Paleo-Eskimos had also left Alaska and settled across the American Arctic. Around AD 1000, at the same time the Thule Inuit were entering Greenland through the northwest, Scandinavian Vikings from Norway and Iceland (starting with Erik the Red) undertook to colonize southwest Greenland, which had been deserted by its Paleo-Eskimo population. As the first wave of Thule people moved into the island and progressed downward along the east coast, the Europeans did not meet the Inuit until the twelfth century, when Norse colonists exploring north Greenland encountered a second wave of Thule migrants who had started progressing along the west coast. We know from different sources that relations between the two groups rapidly turned sour. Owing to unfavourable climate changes, the Vikings finally left Greenland towards the end of the fifteenth century, thus making it possible for the Inuit to settle around the entire west coast.

Following his encounter with a group of Inuit on southeast Baffin Island in 1576, Christopher Hall, one of Frobisher's assistants, had put together a first list of seventeen Inuit words.[42] Two years later Martin Frobisher had landed on the west coast of Greenland but had only found uninhabited ruins and recent traces of Inuit presence. Though Frobisher's wordlist has tended to attract more attention for the simple reason that it predated Davis's by ten years, the forty words that Davis wrote down after coming into contact with a group of Inuit on the west coast of Greenland represented an improvement on Frobisher's compilation, if only because his list was twice as long as Hall's. It has been argued that

'European visitors to the Inuit Arctic waited for over a hundred years before again producing wordlists equivalent to Hall's and Davis's compilations'.[43]

The forty Inuit words compiled by Davis are reproduced here in their original orthography and translation, as found in Davis's account of his second voyage which was printed in Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations.* The first two columns of the following table contain the words and their translations as printed in Hakluyt. Column three summarizes Hinrich Johannes Rink's pioneering attempt at deciphering the list – a task that had been assigned to him by Albert Hastings Markham, the late-nineteenth-century British explorer, who printed Rink's conclusions in his edition of the *Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*.[44] The words therefore appear in their nineteenth-century forms and spellings. Column four consists of the words deciphered by Louis-Jacques Dorais, a leading specialist in the language of the Inuit.[45] They are given in their supposedly original forms. Finally, in the last three columns we present our own hypotheses, giving first what we believe to be the original form of the word, then its morphological analysis and finally its translation.[46] When only the stem can be identified, it is placed after the symbol √.[47]

The words compiled by Davis pose serious problems and they certainly constitute difficult material but they are less impenetrable than might be thought at first sight. There is some sort of coherence in Davis's notation and this allowed us to decipher words that had not been explained so far. For example, it is clear that Davis did not hear the initial /qu/ syllable: '*lethicksaneg*' stands for ***qu****liksanik* while '*blete*' stands for ***qu****bliit*. Similarly, he missed the initial /u/ in several cases: ***u****gguuna* becomes '*gounah*' and ***u****miamik* probably led to '*ponameg*'. We have reason to believe that Davis consistently wrote *gn* for /rn/, not only in '*ugnera*' (*i****rn****ira*), but also in two more words whose ending is not recognizable, '*sugnacoon*' (stem: *si****rn****aak-*) and '*pignagogah*' (stem: *pi****rn****iq*). There is one exception to this pattern: '*ugnake*' stands for ***uq****aq*. But here as in a number of similar instances (e.g. '*uderah*', ***q****ingara*), the problem comes from the voiceless uvular stop /q/, which is a difficult phoneme for any native speaker of English. It must also be acknowledged that the way Davis rendered vowels and some endings is somewhat erratic and often erroneous. But Davis seems to perceive the length opposition in '*maccoah*' (*ma****kk****ua*) and '*macuah*' (*ma****k****ua*), which are two distinct forms of the same lexeme *manna*. All in all, more than threefourths of the words compiled by Davis may be accounted for. Besides, the table clearly shows that Davis more or less correctly understood about fifty per cent of the words, so that we tend to agree with Markham that

> many of these words have a great similarity, both in sound and sense, to those of the present day. The collection of them reflects great credit on the accuracy and perspicacy of Davis; for the difficulty of obtaining and writing down the words and phrases of an unknown tongue is very very great, more especially after such a short intercourse with the natives as Davis had, both parties being totally ignorant of each others's language.[48]

Table 5.1: The Forty Inuit Words Compiled by Davis

	Davis (1586)		Rink (1880)	Dorais (2010)		Our hypotheses	
1	***kesinyoh***	*eat some*	Nerisinait, Only eat.	-	**kiisiniaruk**	kii-si-nia-ruk bite-ANTIP-please-IMPER.2SG/3SG	please, let him have a bite!
2	***madlycoyte***	*musicke*	-	-	**? √ matsa(q)-**		(to sing a baby to sleep)
3	***aginyoh***	*go fetch*	Aiguk, or ainiaruk, Fetch it.	a[g]eniaruk, 'go and fetch it'	**aginiaruk**	agi-nia-ruk go.fetch-please-IMPER.2SG/3SG	please, go and fetch it!
4	***yliaoute***	*I meane no harm*	-	-	**ilauvutit**	ila-u-vu-tit friend-be-INDIC-2SG	you are a friend
5	***ponameg***	*a boat*	Umiamik, (by) Boat.	-	**? umiamik**	umia-mik boat-PL.INSTR	by boat
6	***blete***	*an eye*	-	-	**qubliit**	qubli-it teardrop-PL	teardrops
7	***unuicke***	*give it*	-	-	**? tuniguk**	tuni-guk give-IMPER.2SG/3SG	give it!
8	***tuckloack***	*a stagge or ellan*	Tugto, A reindeer.	-	**tuktuuk**	tuktu-uk caribou-DU	two caribous
9	***panygmah***	*a needle*	-	paningma, 'my daughter's'	**paningma**	paning-ma daughter-RELAT.POSS1SG	my daughter's
10	***aob***	*the see*	-	-	**? tauva**	tauva ANAPH.over.there.INTERJ	it is over there!
11	***mysacoah***	*wash it*	Misuguk, Dip it.	-	**misuguk**	misu-guk dip-IMPER2SG/3SG	dip it!
12	***lethicksaneg***	*a seale skinne*	-	-	**quliksanik**	quliksa-nik caribou.skin.coat-PL.INSTR	with caribou skin coats
13	***canyglow***	*kisse me*	Kuninga, Kiss me.	kunigluk, 'let both of us kiss each other'	**kunigluk**	kunig-luk kiss-IMPER.1DU	let (both of) us kiss each other!

	Davis (1586)		Rink (1880)	Dorais (2010)	Our hypotheses		
14	***ugnera***	*my sonne*	Ernera, My son.	irnera, 'my son'	**irnira**	irni-ra son-POSS1SG	my son
15	***acu***	*shot*	-	-	**?**		
16	***conah***	*leape*	-	-	**?**		
17	***maatuke***	*fish*	Matak, Whale skin.	-	**mattaq**		whale skin with blubber
18	***sambah***	*below*	Sama, Below, or seaward.	samma, 'there it is below'	**samma**	samma down.there.INTERJ	it is down there!
19	***maconmeg***	*will you have this*	Màkuniuga, Some of these.	-	**makkuninnga**	makkuninnga this.thing.here.PL.INSTR	(with) these things here
20	***paaotyck***	*an oare*	Pautik, or pautit, A kayak paddle.	-	**pautik**		kayak paddle
21	***asanock***	*a dart*	Agssangnik, By hand.	-	**assangnik**	assang-nik hand-PL.INSTR	with hands
22	***sawygmeg***	*a knife*	Savingmik, (with) Iron ; or a knife.	savingmik, '[give me] a knife, please!'	**savingmik**	saving-mik knife-INSTR	with a knife
23	***uderah***	*a nose*	-	-	**? qingara**	qinga-ra nose-POSS1SG	my nose
24	***aoh***	*iron*	-	-	**? √ auk-**		(melt)
25	***cocah***	*go to him*	Kâkâ, Go on.	-	**qaa qaa**		hurry up!
26	***aba***	*fallen down*	Atâ, Below it.	avva, 'there it is far away'	**avva**	avva over.there.INTERJ	it is over there!
27	***icune***	*come hither*	Ikunga, Thither.	ikani, 'there'	**ikani**	ikani there-LOC	there
28	***awennye***	*yonder*	-	avani, 'there away'	**avani**	avani over.there-LOC	over there

	Davis (1586)		Rink (1880)	Dorais (2010)	Our hypotheses		
29	***nugo***	*no*	Nagga, No.	-	**naagga**		no
30	***tucktodo***	*a fogge*	-	-	**taktuk**		fog
31	***lechiksah***	*a skinne*	-	-	**quliksaq**		outer caribou skin coat
32	***maccoah***	*a dart*	Mákua, These.	-	**makkua**	makkua this.thing.here.PL.RELAT	of these things here
33	***sugnacoon***	*a coat*	-	-	**√ sirnaak-**		(to be protective)
34	***gounah***	*come down*	-	unuuna, 'by this way down there'	**ugguuna**	ugguuna here-TRANSL	through this way here
35	***sasobneg***	*a bracelet*	-	-	**sapanganik**	sapanga-nik bead-PL.INSTR	with beads
36	***ugnake***	*a tongue*	-	-	**uqaq**		tongue
37	***ataneg***	*a seale*	Âtânik, (by) Sad-dleback seals.	-	**aataanik**	aataa-nik harp.seal-PL.INSTR	with harp seals
38	***macuah***	*a beard*	-	-	**makua**	makua this.thing.here-PL	these things here
39	***pignagogah***	*a threed*	-	-	**√ pirniq**		(sewing that joins two pieces of clothes)
40	***quoysah***	*give it to me*	Káissuk, Give it.	-	**? qaissavat**	qai-ssa-vat hand.over-FUT-INDIC.2SG/3SG	you will hand it over

The meaning of the forms compiled by Davis is quite revealing about both his and the Inuit's degree of communicative involvement. Whereas Frobisher and Hall's list consists exclusively of concrete object nouns – thirteen out of the list's seventeen words denoting body parts[49] – the words collected by Davis include an important proportion of verbs and interjections, which tends to prove that he was indeed possessed of a certain sense of language, for such words are considerably more difficult to identify and translate than common descriptive words.

Bearing in mind that an Inuit word may include one full clause, and sometimes even more than one clause, a central question is whether Davis's wordlist did or did not include references to verbal and non-verbal interactions. Some words speak for themselves, most notably '*yliaoute*' (or *ilauvutit*, which translates as 'you are a friend') and *canyglow* (or *kunigluk*!, meaning 'let us kiss each other!'). Judging from such phrases, we may reasonably conclude that Davis did achieve some degree of familiarity with the Inuit he met on the coast of Greenland. Further evidence of Davis's interaction with the Inuit may be found in words like '*nugo*' (*naagga*, 'no'), '*cocah*' (*qaa qaa*, 'hurry up'), '*quoysah*' (? *qaissavat*, 'you will hand it over'). Davis's list also abounds in imperative forms: '*kesinyoh*' (*kiisiniaruk!*, 'please let him have a bite!'), '*aginyoh*' (*aginiaruk!*, 'please go and fetch it!'), '*unuicke*' (*tuniguk!*, 'give it!'), '*mysacoah*' (*misuguk!*, 'dip it!'). It should be noted that the affix *-niaq-*, which may be translated as 'please' here, somewhat softens the order, making it sound more gentle and polite.

The spatial deictic words point to the deictic anchoring of the list, as is made manifest in such interjections as '*sambah*' (*samma!*, meaning 'it is down there!'), '*aba*' (*avva!*, 'it is over there!'), as well as in pronouns like '*macuah*' (or *makua*, which Davis wrongly takes to mean 'a beard' but which actually means 'these things here'), '*maccoah*' (or *makkua*, misconstrued by Davis as meaning 'a dart', but actually meaning 'of these things here'), or '*maconmeg*' (*makkuninnga*, 'with these things here'). Locative nouns such as '*icune*' (*ikani*, 'here'), '*awennye*' (*avani*, 'over there'), and '*gounah*' (*ugguuna*, 'through this way here') are also of special interest. Although about half the words in the list consist of object words, they do not always appear in the absolutive singular, which is their most basic form. On the contrary, even some of the nouns referring to concrete objects are given in the instrumental, a case form with various possible functions, which indicates that they were embedded in a dialogue: '*lethicksaneg*' (*quliksanik*, 'with caribou skin coats'), '*asanock*' (*assangnik*, 'with hands'), '*sawygmeg*' (*savingmik*, 'with a knife'), '*sasobneg*' (*sapanganik*, misinterpreted by Davis as meaning 'a bracelet', but actually meaning 'with beads'), '*ataneg*' (*aataanik*, 'with harp seals'), '*ponameg*' (? *umiamik*, 'by boat'). Interestingly enough, the list also includes kinship terms, which indicates that the Inuit tried to introduce themselves by explaining and elucidating their family relationships: for example, in Davis's list, the word

'*ugnera*' stands for *irnira*, which means 'my son', while '*panygmah*' (in fact *paningma*) means 'my daughter's'.

Apart from what it tells us in terms of his interaction with the Inuit, Davis's compilation is not entirely devoid of scientific merits. His list is the second document that was written in an Inuit dialect, but it is the first document in Greenlandic. As such, it contains capital information about the language spoken by the Inuit in the late sixteenth century.

From a phonological perspective, the significance of Davis's wordlist is threefold. 1) It is known (from comparisons with other Eskimo languages) that the Proto-Eskimo form for 'to go' was *aɣə-.[50] In all present-day Inuit dialects, the intervocalic */ɣ/ has disappeared from this stem, giving way to *ai-* in Alaska and Canada, *aa-* in Greenland. As Davis's list includes the word '*aginyoh*', we may reasonably conclude that the /ɣ/ still existed in the sixteenth century (***ag***-*iaruk*). 2) In modern West Greenlandic, the only possible consonant clusters are the following: two identical consonants; a uvular followed by a labial or a dental; the cluster /ts/. Now, it is obvious that many more consonant clusters were allowed five centuries ago, as is apparent from the following examples: /bl/ in '*blete*' (*qu**bl**iit*), /kt/ in '*tuckloack*' (*tu**kt**uuk*) and '*tucktodo*' (*ta**kt**uk*), /ks/ in '*lechiksah*' (*quli**ks**aq*), /ɣl/ in '*canyglow*' (*kuni**gl**uk*), /ŋm/ in '*panygmah*' (*pani**ngm**a*) and '*savygmeg*' (*savi**ngm**ik*). All these clusters have undergone regressive assimilation since Davis's time. 3) Whereas Frobisher and Hall's list suggests that a distinction was still made between the vowels /i/ and /ə/ on Baffin Island, the words collected by Davis show no evidence for such a distinction – a difference that was inherited from the Proto-Eskimo four-vowel system. It is highly probable that /ə/ had merged with /i/ and other vowels in Greenland, or at least that /ə/ had become recessive. In fact, Davis erratically uses the letters *y*, *u* and *i* to transcribe reflexes of both */i/ and */ə/.[51]

In addition to its phonological significance, the list is also remarkable for a number of morphological reasons. 1) Davis's list clearly proves that the dual number still existed in the sixteenth century, as can be seen from the words '*tuckloack*' (*tuktu**uk***, 'two caribous') and '*canyglow*' (*kunig**luk***, 'let (both of) us kiss each other'), while it has now disappeared from standard West Greenlandic. 2) Several inflexional affixes still in use in West Greenlandic can be recognized, in particular the instrumental case (*-mik*: '*ponameg*', '*maconmeg*', '*savygmeg*'; *-nik* in the plural: '*sasobneg*', '*ataneg*', '*lethicksaneg*', '*asanock*'), the possessive affix in the first-person singular (*-ga* in the absolutive case, as in '*ugnera*', '*uderah*'; *-ma* in the relative case as in '*panygmah*') and a double-person imperative ending, *-guk* (notably in '*aginyoh*' and '*mysacoah*'). 3) The last word in the list, '*quoysah*' (? *qai**ssa**vat*, 'you will hand it over'), is noteworthy. It possibly suggests that the future tense affix *-ssa-*, which is specific to Greenlandic – albeit derived from the

Proto-Inuit suffix *tya-[52] – already existed in the sixteenth century and is not a recent innovation.

Finally, the list also commands attention because of its lexical features. To give but one example, the word Davis noted for 'fog', '*tucktodo*' (*taktuk*, Proto-Eskimo *taɣətuɣ[53]) has disappeared from Greenland, where the word *pujoq* is used today. However, it is still in use in the western part of the dialect continuum and it is therefore interesting to know that a reflex of *taɣətuɣ *has* existed in Greenland.

All in all, it can be inferred that the variety of Greenlandic that was spoken in the sixteenth century bears more similarities to the dialects currently spoken in the western part of the continuum (i.e. in Canada and Alaska) than it does to modern Greenlandic. There is no compelling evidence as far as the seventeenth century is concerned, but documents dating from the eighteenth century show that, by then, the language had remained phonologically and morphologically quite conservative.[54]

All these elements strongly suggest that Davis's contribution to the history of the quest for the Northwest Passage should be reappraised. Real though they may be, the linguistic merits of Davis's list failed to impress critics like Louis-Jacques Dorais, who stressed the 'poor linguistic skills' of its author. Comparing Davis's wordlist to Hall's compilation, he argued that the latter could 'be understood in a proportion of 100%' and went on to speak disparagingly of Davis's linguistic capabilities:

> The explorer did not always understand what his informants were trying to tell him. For example, the word for 'needle' is translated *panygmah*, which evidently stands for *paningma*, 'my daughter's'. Davis's informant probably tried to explain whose needle it was, while the explorer thought it to be the name of the object itself.[55]

There is no point in denying that Davis did make some interpretative mistakes. But we would like to suggest that the mistakes he made may partly be attributed to the risks he took in interacting with the Inuit. In other words, his errors were the price to pay for his conversational boldness and they probably deserve to be judged less harshly than has sometimes been the case. To put it at its simplest, Davis's situation exemplified Quine's concept of 'radical translation'. The English mariner behaved in much the same way as the linguist imagined by Quine in his 'gavagai' problem: confronted with a form of life that was totally unfamiliar to him, he formed analytical hypotheses in an attempt to catapult himself into the natives' language.[56]

If, as James Axtell argues,[57] judgements are intrinsic to the writing of history, then John Davis's three northern voyages probably deserve at least some degree of praise for the way he managed to interact with the Inuit. Davis never considered the people he encountered as being beyond the pale of humanity, nor did he believe them to be 'naturally gyven to fierceness and rapyne', as Michael

Lok – Frobisher's financial backer – would have it.[58] This may go some way to explaining why his three expeditions to the Arctic did not give rise to any lethal skirmishes. Of course, one must be careful not to paint too simplistic a picture of Davis's northern ventures and we do not want to suggest that he invented modern ethnography – though, in this regard, he certainly fared much better than most of his contemporaries. Our aim is not to pit Davis's scientific successes against Frobisher's economic and moral fiascos. In the field of maritime exploration as in so many other fields, successes and failures are often relative. But it seems to us that both Davis's careful dealing with the natives he came into contact with and the wordlist he compiled provide strong grounds for a revaluation of his role in the history of the quest for the Northwest Passage, quite independently of the fact that he *did* pave the way for the discovery of the passage.

6 BOOKING A NORTHWEST PASSAGE: THOMAS JAMES AND *THE STRANGE AND DANGEROVS VOYAGE* (1633)

I. S. MacLaren[1]

As the subtitle to *The Strange and Dangerous Voyage* (1633) states, the book's author, Welshman Thomas James (*c.* 1593–1635), sailed from Bristol on 2 May 1631 on an 'intended Discouery of the Northwest Passage into the South Sea'.[2] His voyage involved the intentional sinking of his vessel at Charlton Island, James Bay, so that ice would not destroy it during the winter that he and his crew spent miserably on the island. James represented his era accurately in not conceiving of such a passage as mythic. Merchants sponsored his expedition; profit was their goal. Sailing along the west coast of Hudson Bay in 1612 and 1613, Thomas Button had closed by one-half the distance between North America's Atlantic coast and the point on the Pacific coast that Sir Francis Drake reported having touched more than thirty years earlier.

But, as one would expect in a narrative of exploration prior to the Royal Society's edict in the second half of the seventeenth century that they should be expunged, strange and dangerous events, not just businessmen's considerations about shipping, found their way into James's book with sufficient regularity to lend the expedition a lustre as much of wonder and spiritual inquiry as of geographical exploration.[3] Although not mortally doomed, as was Henry Hudson, who, two decades earlier, never emerged from Hudson Bay after some of his crew mutinied and sent him adrift in a shallop, James and his book played a signal role in the early stages of what this volume's editor Frédéric Regard names the long and doomed quest for a Northwest Passage. It is indeed an early role: nearly 200 years would pass before anyone in Europe knew that a Northwest Passage would have to be sutured together with veins of channels and straits in the planet's second-largest archipelago (after Indonesia).

As the first entire book written by an explorer about lands and waters that now comprise Canada, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* remains a remarkable tome. It played a seminal role in casting that long shadow of doom: it reported the unlikelihood of the existence of a passage, almost no new geographical dis-

coveries and, as was regularly the case, the death of crew members (although not many). It exerted considerable literary and psychological influence on future expeditions' orientations to the North American Arctic, the region of Canada about which more books were published prior to 1860 than any other.[4]

Besides James's experience as a ship's captain, which may not have been as extensive as that of other adventurers, this well-educated student of law was sustained, he writes in the dedication, by 'the remembrance of the Accompt that [he] was to giue of [the voyage] to so gracious a Maiesty', namely, King Charles I.[5] His contemporary Luke Foxe (1586–1635) sailed under the direct sponsorship of the king as well as with the support of the merchants of London. James initially was sponsored only by the merchants of Bristol, but in April 1631 he too secured written instructions from the king, probably the same ones that his rival had received.[6]

On the first of two occasions when he was presented at court after his eventful but unsuccessful voyage, James received an express order to furnish 'a Briefe of [his] Voyage'. The king's desire 'became a Command vnto mee, to draw this rude Abstract of it'.[7] Here in the book's dedication the humility topos, long a hallmark of travel writing, is evident.[8] Explorers through to the middle of the nineteenth century identified themselves as far more able to prosecute their voyages, arduous as they may have been, than to present an account of them for public, let alone monarchical, scrutiny. But the change that James rings on this sort of *atechnos* topos is impressive: 'Your Majestie will please to consider, That they were rough elements, which I had to doe withal: and will, with fauour, vouchsafe to pardon, if a Sea-mans style be like what he most conuerseth with'.[9] Neither a plain log nor an amplified, highly allusive courtly tale, this accomplished literary work blends emotional, spiritual and physical ordeal with dispassionate scientific inquiry. An analysis of some of the literary and other qualities and content of *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* shows that James's book offered a template for subsequent British attempts to find the passage in that it demonstrated how an engaging account, versed in the various faiths of its age, could go far in deflecting criticism of an expedition's failure. Most important, the lessons that it taught to other Arctic adventurers were not lost on Sir John Barrow during the Royal Navy's post-Napoleonic assault two hundred years later. Even in the eighteenth century, the British Navy more than once used a carefully prepared book to compensate for the lack of any geographical discoveries of land. In the late 1700s, Bishop John Douglas's work in ghostwriting the narrative of Captain James Cook's second Pacific voyage, the chief discovery of which was the absence of a southern continent, comes to mind. In a different way, Douglas's rendering of Cook as a martyr in the narrative of the explorer's third Pacific voyage compensates for the expedition's halt by ice during a search in 1778 for a northeast passage through Bering Strait, Cook's single effort at Arctic exploration.[10]

Creating a Precedent

James's 'hastily written' volume appeared as a pott quarto (7 ¾ x 6 ⅜ inches; 20 x 16 cm) in mid-March 1633, fewer than five months after the captain and his crew returned to England.[11] As the first book of Northwest Passage exploration published by an expedition's leader for an English monarch, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* created a precedent for the many books published over the next 250 years about one or another state-authorized search for a short northern route to the Pacific.[12] A century after its publication, John Campbell, the great miscellaneous writer and firm advocate of the existence of a passage, wrote in his revised edition of John Harris's collection of voyages and travels that James's book was still 'very justly looked upon as the very best Work of its kind that ever was published ... containing every thing that is worth reading in the rest of them [i.e. narratives of 'Voyages to these Northern Parts']; digested clearly and plainly, so as to carry Conviction throughout, and leave us no room to question either the Abilities or the Sincerity of its Author'.[13]

Such high praise seems to have been just what James sought. If only from his meeting with his competitor Foxe in Hudson Bay (29–31 August 1631), he well knew that he could expect scorn from the Yorkshireman's book, whenever it might appear and, indeed, from any quarter in which geographical discovery was valued over all else. Despite all the elaborate instruments at his disposal,[14] he returned to England with a poor map of what is now James Bay, no particularly good reason for having overwintered there rather than returning home as Foxe had done, and a smaller extent of area covered in two seasons' sailing than Foxe had managed in one. In terms of their results if not in absolute terms, James was the theoretical explorer, Foxe the practical and 'very skilful seaman'.[15]

Although on his deathbed when *North-West Fox* finally appeared early in 1635,[16] James would not have had to read far to find what he doubtless anticipated. In the first paragraph of his preface, Foxe warns his readers not to expect 'any florishing Phrases or Eloquent tearmes, for this Child of mine begot in the North-wests cold Clime, (where they breed no Schollers,) is not able to digest the sweet milke of Rethorick, that's food for them'.[17] Foxe, tetchy that a rival voyage had been sanctioned in the same year by King Charles, declared himself the better seaman, the more prudent agent of his sponsors' investment and the less histrionic reporter of voyages. He prefaced his account with a valuable compilation, worthy of Hakluyt or Purchas, of earlier searches for a passage, thereby aligning himself with the likes of Henry Hudson and Thomas Button and distinguishing himself from his contemporary, who made no such inclusive editorial effort. James was relegated to the company of what Foxe dismissed as 'Practitioners, whom we call Mathematicall Sea-men'. The use of the first-person plural casts up the image of a considerable cohort of salty dogs, graduates of seafaring's school of hard knocks.

The contemptuous comparison that follows conveys forcefully Foxe's feeling that he had endured much scorn in the twenty-two months since the publication of James's book. At great and bitter length he derides the neophytes who prepare for exploration by consulting maps, books and the opinions of mariners and so think 'they are now fit to set sayle and launch foorth to Sea, conceiting of themselves to bee farre more able then the Sea-man'. On the open sea, however, when faced with 'hideous mountaines of high threatning billowes, and raging waves, tempestuous gusts, with hayle, raine and thunder, Shifts of windes, and counter Seas, Currents, Races, Sets, and Over-fals', these newly-minted captains 'will then thinke that they onely dreamed before, when they imagined of the Course of the Seas, and that their Bookes were but weake Schoolemasters; that the talke of Art were farre short of the Practice'. He concludes his harangue with pointed personal and regional rivalry:

> For it is not enough to be a Sea-man, but [it is necessary] to be a painefull Sea-man; for a Sea-bred man of reasonable Capacity, may attaine to so much Art as may serve to Circle the Earths Globe about, but the other wanting the experimentall part cannot; for ... I doe not allow any to be a good Sea *man that hath not vndergone the most Offices about* a Ship, and that [hath not in] his youth bin both taught and inured to all labours; for to keepe a warme Cabbin, & lye in sheets, is the most ignoble part of a Sea man, but to endure and suffer; as a hard Cabbin, cold and salt Meate, broken sleepes, mould[y] bread, dead beere, wet Cloathes, want of fire, all these are within board ... For as Oyle Paper layd vpon the obiect, makes it more transparant, so doth Experience show Art [how] to see without spectacles ... To those who saith, that I am but a North-Countrey Coaster, and hath but been brought vp in small Vessells. I wish their pride to know, that Gods mercy is over all his Creatures, and [He] hath created as good men in the North as in the South.[18]

Although James went out of his way to avoid polarizing the two expeditions' efforts (indeed, his is a mild-tempered work throughout; consider his report of the meeting between the captains in Hudson Bay),[19] and even though both men failed to find a passage, Foxe could not resist the opportunity for one-upmanship that fell to him as the second into print. He cast up the conflict between theory and practice, a common opposition in the day's mariner literature, and one that subsequent criticism on Foxe and James has insistently rehearsed.[20] Foxe's least personal motive for drawing attention to his superiority was his discovery of more geography; hence his compilation of voyages from 1606 to 1619, in which he contextualizes the significance of his discoveries. But rivalry does not explain all the emotion on view here. Perhaps he remained chagrined that James had asked Foxe's fellow Yorkshireman Henry Briggs (1561–1631), a famous mathematician and author of *Treatise of the North-West Passage to the South Sea* (1622), not only for equal honour should either man discover a passage (a request to which Briggs consented), but also for precedence over Foxe (a

request that Briggs denied).[21] In all probability, he found galling not only the honours bestowed on James following his return (Foxe, by contrast, was waiting to be paid and perhaps never did receive payment) and the positive reception apparently accorded James's book in lofty intellectual and perhaps social circles, but also the unjust criticism that he himself weathered for not having overwintered.[22] But by going so far in this prefatory passage as to lash out at southerners (from Bristol, for example) and, further, to bristle later in the narrative about his own comparatively 'meaner Ranke', he fashions an opposition that extends beyond the pale, from the personal to the general.[23]

For his part, James could take recourse in the novelty of wintering in the North, even though, at 52° N latitude, his wintering place on Charlton Island, James Bay (now within the Canadian territory known as Nunavut), lay a full fourteen degrees below the Arctic Circle. He named the island for his king, and the prominent cape that distinguishes James Bay from Hudson Bay to the west he named for his French-born queen, Henrietta Maria (1609–69), which was also the name of his ship. The crew erected three cabins on the island (the largest twenty feet square), roofing them with the ship's sails. After five months' sailing from Bristol, they spent nine wintry months in camp, which James named Charles' Town. His log and/or journal apparently do not survive, leaving open the question of whether he shifted emphasis to the months spent on shore only after his return to England – after, that is, he learned that Foxe had not overwintered. Nevertheless, it is clear that the account of the winter spent ashore constitutes one of the chief reasons for the continuing esteem in which *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* is held by readers of literature and Arctic enthusiasts alike.[24]

Of course, the months spent ashore, while they involved matters of command, did not require seamanship, so James's skills at sea, however disputable, were not needed there.[25] Moreover, because overwintering had jeopardized Hudson's, Button's and Munk's expeditions to the region earlier in the century – Hudson, of course, did not number among his expedition's mutinous survivors; Button lost one of his two ships; and all but three of the sixty-two men on Munk's voyage died – James's relative success stood him in good stead. Even though his geographical discoveries were few, he found an appreciative audience because none of his predecessors in the North and no commander had published a thorough account and certainly not an entire and cohesive narrative. It is worth considering, therefore, that, for all its unique qualities, some of which will now be considered, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* set in motion, over the next 250 years, a series of narratives about a Northwest Passage that routinely featured overwintering by naval explorers, that all but brought the geography of such a passage into existence and that certainly fructified the imagination and theorization of it. No stretch of what is now Canada's 36,000 miles of coastline attracted so many explorers.

Peril and Style

One notable quality of James's book lies outside its contents and in its enduring publishing record. After languishing during the remainder of the seventeenth century, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* stayed more or less in print. Indeed, it is quite remarkable how often one or another version, or at least an abstract, appeared in the 200-year interval between James's voyage and the post-Napoleonic explorations.[26] During the first half of the eighteenth century, every edition of John and Awnsham Churchill's *Collection of Voyages and Travels* included the narrative and appendixes.[27] John Harris's only slightly more modest compilation,[28] enlarged in later editions by John Campbell,[29] featured James as well, if incompletely. In the midst of these collections, a second edition appeared independently, its title downgraded (perhaps by the eighteenth-century rationalist urge to find nothing strange that could not be explained) to merely *The Dangerous Voyage*. The narrative thereafter enjoyed publication at least once each decade until 1818. Then, as the British Navy launched its campaign in search of a passage, Sir John Barrow, second secretary of the Admiralty for more than forty years (1804–6, 1807–45), abstracted and criticized it in ten pages of his *Chronological History*.[30] In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Hakluyt Society issued Thomas Rundall's summary and excerpts of the voyage,[31] and followed it in 1894 with Miller Christy's enduringly valuable edited and annotated pairing of the first edition with the first edition of *North-West Fox*. No other full editions occurred, however, until a facsimile reprint of that edition appeared in the late 1960s. The paperback version of a 1975 Canadian edition fell out of print only in September 2002. Judging by the book's history of publication, it may fairly be claimed that *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* is as enduring as any narrative of exploration.[32]

One of the more strange and dangerous events narrated by James was not encountered but rather was brought about intentionally. In preparing to winter on Charlton Island, he decided to sink his ship to prevent its being smashed by the ice and tides of James Bay. The bay itself is very shallow, scraped into being, like the surrounding Hudson Bay Lowlands, by glaciers. No good winter harbour offered itself, and James thought that an east wind would increase waves enough to run the ship aground repeatedly and eventually smash it on the shallow seafloor, leaving him no escape the next spring. So he had holes drilled below the water line, sunk the ship, and, the next spring, bunged up the holes and had it pumped out. Not an unprecedented procedure, it was nevertheless a rarely deployed tactic and, in the event, a successful one.

James and his men met no local people during their voyage or their winter on Charlton Island. Indeed, they seemed forlorn, even if they felt safe and slept 'securely'[33] knowing that no marauders would assault them. (Perhaps in the 1630s the events at Roanoke and Jamestown endured in the minds of English-

men in the New World, but Hudson had encountered no trouble with the man his crew met in James Bay, even if he later failed to treat with more indigenous people at a village and they set the woods on fire to discourage further contact.) No one starved to death; rather, their afflictions ranged from frostbite to scurvy. Most fearsome of all adversity on land was 'an infinit abundance of bloud-thirsty Muskitoes' in June.[34] By the end of that month, they had been driven to tear up old cloth to make bags for their heads, but the assailants 'would finde wayes and meanes to sting vs, that our faces were swolne hard out in pumples, which would so itch and smart, that we must needs rubbe and teare them'.[35] 'And these flyes', concludes James's entry for June, 'were more tormenting to vs, then all the cold we had heretofore indured'.[36] Not just the insects, but everything about the weather and the island in springtime struck James as strange: '[t]he season here in this Climate, is most vnnaturall: for in the day time, it will be extreme hot: yea not indurable in the Sunne. … In the night again, it will freeze an inch thicke in the ponds, and in the tubs about and in our house'.[37] How he kept ink in a serviceable state for his log/journal is a nice question.

While the crew felt precariously circumstanced physically, paradoxically the men felt spiritually close to God, or at least closer to being on their way to seeing Him 'face to face'.[38] James alludes to Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) in an effort to comfort his men: 'If it be our fortunes to end our dayes here, we are as neere heauen, as in *England;* and we are much bound to God Almighty for giuing vs so large a time of repentance, who as it were dayly calls vpon vs, to prepare our soules for a better life in heauen'.[39] In sound Christian doctrine that echoes David's psalms, he exhorts his men to lean on God for their courage, endurance and patience; thereby might they show resolve in all they do, think and say.

James was an eloquent writer by any standard. What Alan Cooke calls his 'fluent grace of expression'[40] possesses a neo-Ciceronian flourish still dominant in early-seventeenth-century prose, but it is both in evidence and under control. One example treats the question of what happens to sea ice from year to year if it does not melt:

> I haue in *Iuly,* and in the beginning of *August,* taken some of the Ice into the Ship; and cut it square, 2. foote, and put it into the boate, where the Sunne did shine on it with a very strong reflexe about it. And notwithstanding the warmth of the Ship: (for we kept a good fire) and all our breathings, and motions; it would not melt, in 8. or 10. dayes.
>
> It was our practice when we should be two dayes together fast to a piece of Ice, to set markes on it, to see how it did consume: but it yeelded vs small hope of dissoluing. We could not in that time, perceiue any diminution by the sinking of it or otherwise. Neuerthelesse, I thinke that it is ruined with stormes, or consumed with heate some yeeres: or else the Bay would be fild choke-full: But I confesse, that these secrets of nature are past my apprehension.[41]

In some respects, this passage is typical of James's prose. Describing formidable natural phenomena, he does not refer to his men's or his own prayers, and he does not use anticipation of worse calamity to underscore the peril in which the ships or the men find themselves time and again (although both tropes occur commonly elsewhere in the book). Rather, his observations exhibit the reasoned tone of analysis called for by the Royal Society when it was founded three decades later, which stipulated 'a close, naked natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness: bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness, as they can'. The 'constant Resolution' of the Plain Style would be 'to reject all the amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style'.[42] If not throughout, James's style at many points, and especially when he remarks on natural phenomena, would have offered a good pattern. Still, in conforming to that style, James was eloquent by any standard and certainly by contrast to the tedious prose of *North-West Fox*.

A Source of Influence

A prominent strange and dangerous threat to James and his men was the extreme cold they endured so far *south*. They were, after all, in the latitude of London. Without the benefit yet of Alexander von Humboldt's theory of isotherms (1817), James had to try to understand how the climate of two places on the same latitude could differ so remarkably. He endeavoured to anatomize this cold, classifying it as most severe out on the ice, less intense in the Lilliputian woods on the island, and different again inside the three cabins he and his crew had erected on shore. As empirical as his intentions were, he introduced this tripartite discrimination with, of all things, a pun: 'Since now I have spoken so much of the cold, I hope it will not be too coldly taken, if I in a few words make it someway to appeare vnto our Readers'.[43] Usually only the more rustic of Shakespeare's characters stoop to a pun so lame, yet Robert Boyle's 'General History of Air' (1692) would quote it six decades later.[44]

Chemist, physicist, natural philosopher and one of the founders of the Royal Society, Boyle (1627–91) also made the first detailed investigations into the phenomenon of cold, or cryobiology. Published in 1665, *New Experiments and Observations touching Cold* referred often to the thirty-two-year-old *Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*. From James's book, wrote Boyle,

> I have borrowed more observations, then from those of any other Sea-man ... [B]y his breeding in the University, and [by] his acquaintance with the Mathematicks, he was enabled to make far better use then an ordinary Sea-man would have done of the opportunity he had to observe the *Phaenomena* of Cold, by being forced to Winter, in a place where he endured little (if at all) less extremity of Cold, then that of *Nova Zembla*.[45]

In establishing James's authority, Boyle refers to two additional points. First, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* was already 'somewhat scarce, and not to be met with in *Purchas's* Tomes (having been written some years after they were finished)'. Second, James was held in high regard: 'this Gentleman was much commended to me, both by some Friends of mine, who were well acquainted with him, and by the Esteem that competent Judges appear to have made of him'. Boyle links this respect to the favour shown James by Charles I, and he notes that James published his book 'by his Majesties command'.[46] He found James to be as careful an observer of the effects of cold as was possible up to the time he wrote (still many decades before the invention of the thermometer in 1714 by Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit (1686–1736)). Even more impressive to Boyle was the location of James's observations, that is, in lands not far from where recent maps had applied the label *frigore inhabitabilis* – 'uninhabitable because of cold'.[47]

Boyle decided that the claim that water was the *primum frigidum* (the source of cold) was without merit. In rejecting that hypothesis, he cited James's observation that ice even in shallow James Bay formed at the surface of the sea – where water and air interact – but not down on the seafloor, in fact, not more than six feet below the surface.[48] James's account is so frequently quoted in Boyle's treatise (three dozen times) and in his other writings as to render the book a scientific authority in the later seventeenth century. John Campbell used this evidence in the 1740s as the third of his five reasons for publishing a nearly complete reprint of the 1633 *Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* in his revised edition of Harris's vast anthology: 'the famous Mr. *Robert Boyle* chiefly depended upon the Extracts he made from [James's] Work, in framing one of the most valuable Pieces that he published, I mean his History of Cold'.[49]

Other oddities of the voyage are striking even without having influenced scientific discoveries in later ages. The most notable is a very strange manifestation of human death. Four members of the expedition perished, all after the ship's arrival at Charlton Island. In one case, as the result of an entanglement with cable and rope on 20 August, Richard Edwards, the gunner, had one leg amputated on 19 November. He languished and could not be kept warm: 'his playster would freeze at his wound, and his bottle of Sacke at his head'. When he expired three days later, '[w]e committed him at a good distance from the Ship vnto the Sea'.[50] The careful stipulation that the burial occurred far from the ship instances rhetorical foreshadowing, for this man had to be buried a second time.

On one day in the spring, Arthur Price, the ship's master, returned ashen-faced to the cabins on shore after discovering 'some part of our Gunner; vnder the Gunroome ports. This man, we had committed to the Sea at a good distance from the Ship, and in deep water, neere 6. moneths before'.[51] The next day, James sent men out to the ship on the gruesome exercise of digging out the body so that it could be buried with the others on Brandon Hill, the graveyard on the esker behind

Charles' Town (named by James after the hill that overlooks the city of Bristol). The fact that Edwards's body had – to adopt Ralph Bodilly's striking image – 'come to tap again at the door of [the gunner's] quarters'[52] terrorized the men:

> [H]e was fast in the Ice, his head downewards, and his heele vpward, for he had but one legge; and the plaster was yet at his wound: In the afternoone, they had digd him cleere out: after all which time, he was as free from noysomenesse [that is, from noxiousness], as when we first committed him to the Sea. This alteration had the Ice and water, and time onely wrought on him: that his flesh would slip vp and downe vpon his bones, like a gloue on a mans hand.[53]

A body come back from the dead to die again, if not quite Lazarus-like and miraculous, certainly qualifies as one of the 'rarities observed' that James's subtitle promises. The description fascinated Boyle, who quoted it to argue that the 'bare coldness of the Air' can successfully preserve organisms.[54] James's readers are invited to combine this bizarre occurrence with the 'vnnaturall' spring climate, the 'growling' of the sea ice, the unmentioned but not unremembered mutiny of the crew of Hudson's *Discovery* two decades before in nearly the same place, and a dangerous accident: a fire set on 25 June 'to see if it would be answered'. James occasionally lit large fires 'to haue knowledge if there were any Saluages on the maine or the Ilands about vs' in the hope that conversation might reveal a passage or the presence of other Christians. This time, however, the surrounding shrubs 'tooke fire like flaxe or hempe'.[55] Before it burned itself out, the fire had transformed James's sixteen-mile-long island of winter cold into an inferno, burning everything in its path, including Charles' Town, and threatening the sails, which were still on shore.

From extreme cold to burning heat, from dead and buried to frozen and migrating – by mid-July 1632, such extremes left James overhearing 'the men murmure; and say that ... if they had a thousand pounds, they would giue it, so they lay fairely by them [who were already dead and buried]: for we (say they) are destined to starue vpon a piece of Ice'.[56] It is as if the men had been driven to think like the author of Ecclesiastes: 'Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive'.[57]

The polarity of experience and the proximity of death witnessed on this voyage prompt one to wonder whether James's book influenced John Milton, an Arctic enthusiast who would try his hand at history by penning a now seldom remembered *Brief History of Moscovia,* probably sometime in the early 1640s. More parallels appear in Book II of *Paradise Lost,* published thirty-five years after *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*. There, Milton depicts the 'frozen Continent' on the far side of the river Lethe in Hell:

> Beyond this flood a frozen Continent
> Lies dark and wilde, beat with perpetual storms

Of Whirlwind and dire Hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice …
the parching Air
Burns frore, and cold performs th'effect of Fire.
Thither by harpy-footed Furies hail'd,
At certain revolutions all the damn'd
Are brought: and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extreams, extreams by change more fierce,
From Beds of raging Fire to starve in Ice
Thir soft Ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immovable, infixt, and frozen round,
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire,
They ferry over this *Lethean* Sound
Both to and fro, thir sorrow to augment.[58]

That James's book fired the imagination of Samuel Taylor Coleridge in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* has been well known since the nineteenth century.[59] That the gunner's body, 'immovable, infixt, and frozen round' the hull of the ship, the unnaturally intense heat of June and the shockingly deep cold of February and the danger of the forest fire in July all might have inspired Milton remains a beguiling possibility.[60]

An Explorer-Poet

Two poems by James also feature prominently in his maritime narrative. Collectively, they juxtapose faith in the empiricism of humanist science with faith in God. A stolid Christian faith and inclination to contemplation and devotion anchor his poetic efforts, which clearly identify the North as a testing ground – an extreme, stern and remote one – of goodness by evil where Satan reigns unopposed. There, fancifully, one is closer to God (higher up on a Mercator projection) but also, all too immediately, surrounded by death, as James was by the death of almost a quarter of his crew and by the spectre of Hudson, Hudson's son and five other men set adrift in James Bay by a mutinous crew on 23 June 1611, never to be seen again. The iconography of the North as the mutinous, fallen Lucifer's domain was sufficiently well known to Bible readers of James's day as to be taken for granted. As R. D. Bedford notes, both Isaiah and Jeremiah make the association commonplace: 'evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction'.[61]

James's second poem,[62] an elegy, refers to Brandon Hill as a 'dung-hill' from which the survivors escape after testing, as if from Milton's hell. That poem later attracted the strong commendation of Robert Southey and of Coleridge critic and James researcher Ivor James.[63] James's first poem, a devotion, occurs in the narrative on a dark night at sea. It contains a fine conceit that highlights

the early-seventeenth-century concern, particularly but not exclusively among Puritans, that the lure of technology will pervert one's faith in God. Reading it prompts the view of James more as a poet exploring than as an explorer jotting down what – using the humility (*atechnos*) topos again – he calls 'ragged and teared Rimes',[64] rimes of an ancient mariner:

> Oh, my poore soule, why doest thou grieue to see
> So many Deaths muster to murther mee?
> Looke to thy selfe, regard not mee; for I
> Must doe (for what I came) performe, or die.
> So thou mayst free thy selfe from being in
> A dung-hill dungeon; A meere sinke of sinne,
> And happily be free'd, if thou beleeue,
> Truly in God through Christ, and euer liue.
> Be therefore glad yet: ere thou goe from hence,
> For our ioynt sinnes, let's doe penitence,
> Vnfeignedly together. When we part,
> He with the Angels Ioy, with all my heart.
> We haue with confidence relied vpon
> A rustie wyre, toucht with a little Stone,
> lncompast round with paper, and alasse
> To house it harmelesse, nothing but a glasse
> And thought to shun a thousand dangers, by
> The blind direction of this senselesse flye.
> When the fierce winds shatter'd blacke nights asunder,
> Whose pitchie clouds, spitting forth fire and thunder,
> Hath shooke the earth, and made the Ocean roare;
> And runne to hide it, in the broken shoare:
> Now thou must Steere by *faith*, a better guide;
> 'Twill bring thee safe to heauen, against the tyde
> Of Satans malice. Now let quiet gales
> Of sauing grace, inspire thy zealous sayles.[65]

However rich Robert Boyle might have found James's careful observations and records of natural phenomena elsewhere in the narrative, he might have been nonplussed by these thirteen couplets of occasional verse, in which faith in technology is implicitly abjured by a survivor who escaped with his life, acknowledged his folly and, once arrived back in Bristol on 22 October 1632, 'went all to Church, and gaue God thankes for his preseruation of [James and his crew] amidst so many dangers',[66] thereby affording a precedent for the ancient mariner.

The poem's address to the soul at the outset echoes the refrain of the single lyric that forms Psalms 42 and 43 ('Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance'.[67] It thus evokes the predicament of the psalmist who lives in the far north of Palestine, near Mount Hermon and the sources of the

Jordan, and who has been prevented by illness from making his accustomed pilgrimage to Jerusalem.[68] Also in remote circumstances and caught in the midst of a perfect storm on the last night of September 1631,[69] the explorer-poet is driven to number his and his soul's 'ioynt sinnes' (l. 10), hoping that a confession of them will lead to a way of tacking round 'the tyde / Of Satans malice' (ll. 24–5). Chief among these sins is the reliance placed in the technology of the day – symbolized by the 'rustie wyre, toucht with a little Stone' (l. 12) – of which so much is made in the book's dedication and the one appendix written by James. Instead of believing '[t]ruly in God through Christ' (l. 8), James and his soul (if not the entire crew) have put their faith in this 'senselesse flye' (l. 18) and its accoutrements, paper and glass. Under the circumstances, these objects prove pitifully unable to withstand the fire and thunder of the clouds that shake the earth and make the ocean roar. Repentance offers the only recourse after such folly.

What is the sin of steering without faith (1. 23)? The answer is embedded in the senseless fly. In James's day, it could carry several meanings, some of them significant to this context. First, in nautical terminology, according to William Folkingham's *Synopsis of Surueying* (1610), 'the flie is a card diuided into eight, sixteene, thirty two equall parts in the Limbe with competent extention to shew the Meridian and Coastages of the Plot'.[70] Beyond this narrow terminology, of course, it meant a type of insignificant thing, as in a mere fly. Both meanings seem available in this context, and they are compounded by a third, which is most relevant to the poem's theme, insofar as 'Satans malice' is explicitly identified as the foe. Custom frequently rendered the Devil in the form of a fly, indeed, the lord of all flies. In that form it was able to penetrate one's most private physical and spiritual places as a spy, parasite or flatterer.[71] By the time James's expedition left Charlton Island in July 1632, its experience with a torment of 'flyes' (mosquitoes), worse even than winter's cold, had added a yet more penetrating significance. The 'penitence' (l. 10) done by the poem in locating the evil permits regeneration for the poet and the soul in the last two couplets' expression of hope 'now' to steer by faith. The 'gales / Of sauing grace' will 'inspire' or, following Genesis I, breathe on the soul's 'zealous sayles' (l. 26).

At the point of the farthest north known in James's day, where the Devil takes hold – as he was thought to do in all extreme, as opposed to temperate, realms – maritime and spiritual predicaments and resolutions combine consummately. Consequently, the spiritual value of the discoveries made by technology undergoes rigorous interrogation.[72] The poem's theme contradicts the interest in technology that the book elsewhere frequently avows and the careful observations that a trained natural philosopher of James's époque could demonstrate. Such contradictions render the natural philosopher and poet in James most intriguing, placing on view as they do the fundamental struggle between the diurnal empirical and the eternal spiritual realms. Nor is *The Strange and Dan-*

gerovs Voyage, which begins with an enumeration of all the scientific instruments that James took with him, quite finished with this contradiction. The combination of the book's three appendices places on view the contrarieties with which James's époque wrestled in the prolonged effort to understand how the paradox of Christian humanism could be reconciled.[73]

The esteem accorded James's book in surviving references does not necessarily prove its popularity. Perhaps the first printing was too large, perhaps the book did not sell widely; in any case, there is no indication of an immediate second printing or of a second edition during the seventeenth century. His indifferent geographical success, his descent into obscurity after his untimely death, the novelty of a single-authored book of exploration rather than a compendium/collection of accounts, the association of the book with an increasingly unpopular king and the Great Fire of London in 1666 – any of these factors might explain the lack of any indication that *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* was read widely enough during the seventeenth century to warrant the use of the adjective 'popular' to describe it.[74] The plethora of eighteenth-century appearances of the narrative tells a different story, however. As for the nineteenth century, when Sir John Barrow criticized James's science in 1818, he profited from subsequent experience to observe trenchantly that, although '[a]t that time the thermometer had not been brought into use, nor any instrument known to measure the degree of absolute cold; … 'the sufferings of his crew, from its great intensity, could only have arisen from mismanagement, as the people belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company pass the winters comfortably enough along the line of coast near to which Charlton Island is situated, and eight or ten degrees farther to the northward'.[75] Barrow has been perhaps James's severest critic through the ages. Arguably the first career civil servant in Britain, survivor of the reorganization of the Admiralty in the 1830s, *de facto* director of the Royal Society in the last years of Joseph Banks's life and founder of the Royal Geographical Society, Barrow evinced little patience for the narrative of any voyage that failed to find a Northwest Passage (this despite the fact that no geographical feature on Earth took longer to discover). However, a separate study of Barrow's role in dismissing James's splendid account during the era of what most thought was enlightened Royal Navy exploration of the Arctic awaits another occasion. Meanwhile, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* still stoutly stands the test of time as one of the most accomplished Northwest Passage narratives.

7 ANTHROPOLOGY AS CURIOSITY: SAMUEL HEARNE'S *JOURNEY FROM PRINCE OF WALES'S FORT ... TO THE NORTHERN OCEAN IN THE YEARS 1769, 1770, 1771 & 1772* (1795)

Nathalie Zimpfer

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century, Native American reports of copper mines near a northern river prompted the Hudson's Bay Company to send missions of exploration into the remote northwestern interior of Canada. As they all failed, interest in the ore declined, until in 1767 Moses Norton, the son of the Hudson's Bay Company's first governor, now at its head, chose Samuel Hearne – an inexperienced twenty-four-year-old stranger who had only joined the HBC in 1766 – to undertake a series of overland expeditions. A young and fit man, Hearne had an excellent reputation for snowshoeing. No fewer than three attempts were however necessary to find the mouth of the Coppermine River and the exact location of the copper ore. *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771 & 1772*, published posthumously in 1795, is Hearne's account of his ventures.

For his third expedition, Hearne imposed his choice of Matonabbee as his guide. A leading Indian, Matonabbee enjoyed great prestige among the Chipewyans and the Athabascan Crees and he was fully devoted to Hearne. Thanks to Matonabbee's help, and accompanied by a small party of Indians, Hearne reached the Coppermine River on 14 July 1771. The Indians then took him thirty miles south to one of the copper mines, where Hearne was terribly disappointed as he could not specify in what quantities copper was present. He also pointed out that the idea of establishing a quarry in the region was in fact totally unrealistic. But Hearne had become the first European to reach the Arctic Ocean travelling overland and, temporarily at least, had set to rest the question of the Northwest Passage. On 1 July 1771, he had placed the mouth of the Coppermine River two hundred miles too far to the north, which had reinforced his conclusion that there was no northwest passage via Hudson Bay. But as Alexander Dalrymple, the great geographer of the time, still believed in the existence

of a northwest passage, Hearne's reliability started to be questioned. In fact, by pointing out some of Hearne's exaggerations, Dalrymple discredited his standing as an explorer for years to come.[1]

The main interest of Hearne's ventures, first briefly narrated by Bishop Douglas in his 1784 introduction to Captain Cook's third voyage,[2] lies in his record of life among the Chipewyan Indians, the writing of which, according to Richard Glover, is 'easily the most surprising achievement of such a semi-literate man as Hearne'.[3] Aside from being rather uncharitable, the remark is somewhat beside the point as it shirks the question of what Ian McLaren calls the 'status and identity' of this text, which should indeed be clarified before textual analysis is applied to it.[4] Travelogues may be read either as literature or as reliable sources of facts, but it is our general tendency to tacitly accept travellers' stated or unstated claims to the representation of reality. This tacit assumption, McLaren explains elsewhere, blinds us to 'all [the] factors that may qualify straightforward readings of books of travel and exploration', notably all the alterations that they may undergo at the hands of editors.[5] This is all the more crucial in Hearne's case because of the complexity of the description he provides of 'a country which ha[d] hitherto been entirely unknown to every European except [himself]',[6] at a time when one of Britain's most prominent historians portrayed the Indians as 'savage', 'indolen[t]' and incapable of 'useless speculation'.[7] While Hearne's perspective seems to evade the thorny issue of the imperialist and commercial stakes of his enterprise, his account is nevertheless marked by tensions, due to his ambiguous role as an HBC employee and at the same time as an explorer whose Eurocentric certainties are gradually shattered.

William Horne argued that Hearne's experience should be 'categoriz[ed] phenomenologically' since his conscience was shaped 'by Arctic nature' in the course of his journey, so much so that he 'disburden[ed] himself ... of his culture [and] pick[ed] up the culture of Arctic wilderness'.[8] I argue that Hearne never entirely moved 'the locus of culture' into the Arctic wilderness, even if he partially accepted the epistemological destabilizing that resulted from his increasing knowledge of Chipewyan culture. Unlike most accounts of exploration, Hearne's narrative does not present itself as a 'quest', an 'oddyssey' or an 'ordeal'.[9] His attitude towards the people that he meets is best defined as an ethnographic quest underpinned by what I shall call open-minded 'curiosity'.

As Barbara Benedict has pointed out, '"curiosity" signifies many meanings in the eighteenth-century'.[10] In the 1700s, it was not rare for 'curiosity' to be opposed to true knowledge. In his *Essay on Criticism* (1711), Alexander Pope thus deemed critics 'of less Judgment than Caprice / *Curious*, not *Knowing*, not *exact*, but *nice*'.[11] This contradistinction was to be theorized a few years later by David Hume in his *Treatise on Human Nature* (1739), in which 'curiosity' is reduced to a remedy to the 'uneasiness' caused by the 'instability and incon-

sistancy [*sic*]' of an idea, and contrasted to 'the love of knowledge', defined as an 'exercise of the genius and the understanding in the discovery or comprehension of any truth'.[12] As of the middle of the eighteenth century, however, such a dichotomy had been superseded by a more complex apprehension of the concept: in his *Dictionary*, Samuel Johnson cites no fewer than nine definitions of 'curious', including 'accurate', 'artful' and 'rigid'; for 'curiosity', he distinguishes 'an act of curiosity' or 'nice experiment', as well as 'an object of curiosity' or 'rarity', from the 'inclination to enquiry'.[13]

'Curiosity' as 'inclination to enquiry' is certainly an apt way of defining Hearne's attitude. As a boy, according to Joseph Tyrrell, he was characterized both by his 'very quick apprehension' and 'unusual ... ingenuity', and by his 'averse[ness] to trade'.[14] 'Ingenuity' and disinterestedness are indeed features that stand out in Hearne's narrative of his life among the Indians, which evinces none of the combination of fact-finding zeal and philosophical presumption so characteristic of post-Enlightenment social explorers, but rather shows genuine and surprisingly unprejudiced interest in the people that he encounters. Curiosity here becomes what Benedict calls a desire 'to pursue knowledge by empirical means: observation, experimentation, exploration'.[15] Similarly, his account is entirely devoid of the aggressiveness which can be part and parcel of exploration narratives whenever the knowledge-gathering process is often but the prelude to outright conquest.[16] Yet, when Hearne's account is envisaged in its entirety, one comes to realise not only that this attitude is the outcome of a long process of evolution, but also that it is complicated by an unresolved tension between an imperialist agenda and an ethnographic perspective. It is to an analysis of the textual manifestations of Hearne's oscillation between these two referential frames that this essay is devoted.

Imperialism under the Guise of Empiricism

Samuel Hearne's ethnographic practice initially proceeds in a traditional empiricist manner. Though rather uneducated and even, if Tyrrell is to be believed, 'predetermined never to become a learned man' in the sense that he early on manifested a great 'dislike to reading and writing',[17] Hearne nevertheless inscribes his text within the tradition of natural history by dedicating it to Samuel Webb, an eminent member of the Royal Society, and by defining his style as 'plain and unadorned'.[18] His relationships with Indians are at first vertical rather than horizontal: the native Americans are not so much people that Hearne interacts with as representatives of an absolute Other, at best objects of study to be maintained at a safe distance. This is clearly perceptible in statements such as: 'It is scarcely possible to conceive any people so void of common understanding', or 'I never saw a set of people that possessed so little humanity'.[19] When Hearne initially

describes the Chipewyans, cultural difference is not yet part of his referential framework and his rhetoric places the Indians in a process of 'othering', which Mary-Louise Pratt has clearly identified: the individuals described are homogenized as a collective 'they', or 'he', and the portrait of manners and customs fixes the Other in a timeless present. Discourse thus 'textually produces the Other without an explicit anchoring either in the observing self or in a particular encounter in which contact with the Other takes place'.[20]

A subtle form of 'othering' in Hearne's description of Indian life is the use of what Johannes Fabian calls the 'ethnographic present',[21] which produces a stereotyped and essentialized representation of otherness, as is the case in statements such as 'The Indians are far more expert in killing Geese, as well as every other species of game, than any European'.[22] Ontologically speaking, Fabian argues, such statements imply 'a static view of society, one that is unattentive to the fact that all cultures are constantly changing'; it projects 'a categorical view' on the society under analysis and 'at worst ... contains assumptions about the repetitiveness, predictability, and conservatism of primitives'.[23] Another classic stereotype regarding Indians concerns the extreme elasticity of their stomachs. A trite incident – a bout of indigestion undergone by Matonabbee – leads Hearne to the following overgeneralization:

> Nothing is more common with those Indians, after they have eat [*sic*] as much at a sitting as would serve six moderate men, than to find themselves out of order; but not one of them can bear to hear that it is the effect of eating too much: in defence of which they say, that the meanest of the animal creation knows when hunger is satisfied, and will leave off accordingly. This, however, is a false assertion, advanced knowingly in support of an absurd argument.[24]

This immediately prompts him to reiterate a cultural stereotype: 'the Northen Indians are at times so voracious, yet they can bear hunger with a degree of fortitude which, as Mr. Ellis justly observes of the Southern Indians, "is much easier to admire than to imitate"'. The use of the ethnographic present in relation to food is far from being coincidental, as a people's diet was regarded by Europeans as a major cultural index, making it possible to measure the degree of a people's advancement toward civilization.[25] In another passage, Hearne claims:

> It is no less true, that these people, when I first knew them, would not eat any of our provisions, sugar, raisins, figs, or even bread; for though some of them would put a bit of it into their mouths, they soon spit it out again with evident marks of dislike; so that they had no greater relish for our food than we had for theirs. At present, however, they will eat any part of our provisions, either fresh or salted; and some of them will drink a draft of porter, or a little brandy and water; and they are now so far civilized, and attached to the English, that I am persuaded any of the Company's servants who could habituate themselves to their diet and manner of life, might now live as secure under their protection, as under that of any of the tribes of Indians who border on Hudson's Bay.[26]

The apparent acknowledgement that the disgust for the other's food is mutual is rapidly superseded by Hearne's interpretation that this initial disgust is no other than a sign of the Indians' barbarity and that their progressive habituation to European food in fact testifies to their becoming 'civilized'. Hearne's observation is thus governed by a deeply ideological conception of otherness whose main characteristic is fixity.[27] Description is in fact a process of essentialization whereby mere attributes are turned into ontological properties and cultural differences transformed into hierarchical distinctions. Hearne does not merely observe but interprets what he sees according to a pre-existing epistemological framework: this is imperialism under the guise of empiricism.

A significant example of such practice is Hearne's use of the adjective 'barbarous', which does not so much testify to ordinary prejudices as it reveals the explorer's implicit alignment with the 'four-stage theory' (or 'stadial theory') propounded by Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, an account of historical development far more prevalent in eighteenth-century England than the theory of the 'good savage'.[28] Adam Smith notwithstanding – 'probably [the] most prominent propagator' of stadial theory and the author of 'a particularly lucid outline' of it[29] – the thinking of Scottish historian William Robertson was equally influential given the success of his *History of the Discovery and Settlement of America* (1777), which went through several reprints. Similarly, Adam Ferguson (*An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1767), John Millar (*Origin of the Distinctions of Rank*, 1771) and Henry Home, known as Lord Kames (*Sketches of the History of Man*, 1774), each in his own way, propounded the theory according to which human societies universally develop from barbarism to 'polished society' following a fixed stadial pattern. While the number of stages sometimes varied, the most popular version comprised four stages: the hunting stage; shepherding; an agricultural stage; and finally commercially-based civilization. This theory of evolution led Robertson to claim that 'in every inquiry concerning the operations of men when united together in society, the first object of attention should be their mode of subsistence',[30] from which it ensued that it was the ability of humanity to gain instrumental control over nature which was regarded as the signal step in the civilizing process. The famous Lockean apophthegm that 'In the beginning all the World was America',[31] as well as Adam Ferguson's belief, taken from his *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), that 'It is in [the Indians'] present condition that we are to behold, as in a mirror, the features of our own progenitors',[32] are two well-known examples of the pervasiveness of this theory in eighteenth-century England.

It has been established that Hearne received editorial help for the writing of his account, in particular for the famous 'Bloody Falls scene' – so called after the massacre of a group of 'Esquimaux' by Hearne's Indians there – which was written in such a way as to 'heighten audience suspense'.[33] Yet Hearne's field notes describe the episode as 'cruel', definitely leaving no doubt as to his feel-

ings about the massacre.[34] More importantly, the recurrence of related adjectives throughout Hearne's narrative testifies to the imprint of Scottish Enlightenment ideas on his thinking: expressions like 'want of humanity', 'so little humanity' or 'the little humanity of which those people are possessed',[35] together with epithets such as 'barbarous', 'barbarians', 'uncivilized'[36] and 'savage',[37] all point to his indebtedness to stadial theory. Such terms also occur in passages where Hearne merely describes what he sees. The question of how an uneducated Englishman like Hearne might have come to be influenced by Scottish Enlightenment stadialism need not be as vexing as it first appears. John Barrel once argued that the prevalence of the picturesque aesthetics in the eighteenth century made it impossible for anyone with an interest in landscape to describe it without applying the principles of landscape composition, 'whether he knew what he was doing or not'.[38] One might argue that, similarly, some theories were so prevalent that one imbibed them, consciously or unconsciously.

A grammatical symptom of such ideology may be found in verb construction, as passages describing actions performed by the Indians are mostly characterized by a marked dependence on passive and impersonal constructions so that the Indians' activities are presented almost as though they were produced anonymously, whereas the active agency of Europeans is more often than not foregrounded. Typical sentences to describe Indian life will be: 'The usual sign for the approach of strangers was given', or 'To pitch an Indian's tent in winter, it is first necessary to search for a level piece of dry ground', or 'Several days were now spent in feasting and gluttony'. Nowhere however is the dissymmetry more obvious than in the long passage about the Indians' fishing technique, in which the only sentence in the active form is the one describing an action by the Englishmen: 'The Europeans settled in Hudson's Bay proceed much in the same manner, though they in general take much more pains, but the above method is found quite sufficient by the Indians'.[39] Hearne's text thus subtly enforces and reinforces a form of cultural superiority over the Chipewyans.

Being In-Between

Equally striking, however, is the evolution perceptible in the narrative. The fact that impersonal structures should increasingly be used to describe Hearne's own actions – such as 'It was tolerable walking', or 'It was tolerable eating'[40] – is but one of the numerous signs of his gradual estrangement from his initial system of meaning-making. Of course, as an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, Hearne, in Bruce Greenfield's words, is never entirely free 'to become the creature of his own experiences'.[41] On the other hand, the symbolic power of Prince of Wales's Fort, which acts as a synecdoche of Eurocentric values and to which Hearne's interpretive framework is heavily indebted, decreases as the English-

man walks away from it.[42] This is due mainly to the nature of the expedition: overland exploration, as opposed to maritime discovery expeditions, does not allow the explorer to preserve his aloofness from local culture; and by increasing the explorer's dependence on the native inhabitants to the point of making it a matter of life and death, it radically modifies the relationship between the European and the 'savage', precluding a radical objectification of the 'other'.

One crucial passage in particular testifies to Hearne's growing awareness of the shifting balance of power. When he first understands that '[his] party' intend to murder a group of Esquimaux, for no other reason than they 'are understood by the Copper Indians to frequent [the Copper-mine River] in considerable numbers', he 'endeavour[s] as much as possible to persuade them from putting their inhuman design into execution'. His attempt, however, proves unsuccessful and only prompts his fellow travellers to conclude that '[he] was actuated by cowardice . . . [and] was afraid of the Esquimaux',[43] to which Hearne responds as follows:

> As I knew my personal safety depended in a great measure on the favourable opinion they entertained of me in this respect, I was obliged to change my tone, and replied, that I did not care if they rendered the name and race of the Esquimaux extinct ... I never afterwards ventured to interfere with any of their war-plans. Indeed, when I came to consider seriously, I saw evidently that it was the highest folly for an individual like me, and in my situation, to attempt to turn the current of a national prejudice which had subsisted between these two nations from the earliest periods[44]

What the passage reveals is Hearne's growing awareness of the in-betweenness of his situation, which gradually makes his role as official employee of the Hudson's Bay Company all but incompatible with his dependence on his companions. Besides, daily contact with the Indians renders the realization of their competence unavoidable and alters Hearne's sense of superiority. As a result, his account increasingly foregrounds his oscillation between two referential frameworks.

While such an oscillation has been read as a mark of hesitation that weakens the narrative,[45] I suggest that it is precisely what gives depth to Hearne's rendition as it highlights the complexity of his experience and points to the shift in his representation of alterity. His account is studded with sentences describing Indian practises in which modals and concessive clauses – 'I must acknowledge', 'It must be allowed that', 'It must be acknowledged that' – testify both to his increasing discomfort at having his cultural assumptions questioned and to the cognitive dissonance created in him by the confrontation of the reality that he discovers with his cultural prejudices. The space here allotted does not make it possible to list all occurrences of such markers, but suffice it to say that the phrase 'I must confess' recurs no less than eight times in the narrative.[46]

More generally, close reading of the text shows that Hearne increasingly perceives a discrepancy between the epistemology pertaining to his official role

and the reality of alterity. One of the most significant episodes in this respect is his description of the Indian method of 'impoun[ding] deer'. One passage in particular deserves to be quoted at length as it reveals all the shifts in Hearne's understanding of a practice that he originally deems cruel:

> Such an easy way of procuring a comfortable maintenance in the Winter months, (which is by far the worst time of the year), is wonderfully well adapted to the support of the aged and infirm, but is too apt to occasion a habitual indolence in the young and active, who frequently spend a whole Winter in this indolent manner: and as those parts of the country are almost destitute of every animal of the furr kind, it cannot be supposed that those who indulge themselves in this indolent method of procuring food can be masters of any thing for trade; whereas those who do not get their livelihood at so easy a rate, generally procure furrs enough during the Winter to purchase a sufficient supply of ammunition, and other European goods, to last them another year. This is nearly the language of the more industrious among them, who, of course, are of most importance and value to the Hudson's Bay Company, as it is from them the furrs are procured which compose the greatest part of Churchill trade. But ... what do the more industrious gain by giving themselves all this additional trouble? ... It is true, the carriers pride themselves much on the respect which is shewn to them at the Factory ... [but] all that they can possibly get there for the furrs they procure after a year's toil, seldom amounts to more than is sufficient to yield a bare subsistence ... while those whom they call indolent and mean-spirited live generally in a state of plenty, without trouble or risque [*sic*]; and consequently must be the most happy, and, in truth, the most independent also. It must be allowed that they are by far the greatest philosophers, as they never give themselves the trouble to acquire what they can do well enough without ... It is undoubtedly the duty of every one of the Company's servants to encourage a spirit of industry among the natives, and to use every means in their power to induce them to procure furrs and other commodities for trade, by assuring them of a ready purchase and good payment for every thing they bring to the factory: and I can truly say, that this has ever been the grand object of my attention. But I must at the same time confess, that such conduct is by no means for the real benefit of the poor Indians; it being well known that those who have the least intercourse with the Factories, are by far the happiest.[47]

The repetition of the adjective 'indolent' first seems to indicate that Hearne indicts such a practice as evil, but the rest of the passage reveals that what is at stake is no less than a complete reversal of the epistemological categories of 'civilization'. Hearne in fact endeavours to demonstrate the relative value of the notion of 'indolence' by pointing out the irrelevance of the British opposition between industry and indolence in an Indian context, while simultaneously praising the wisdom of the Indians' attitude as well as their 'independence'. Not only does he criticize the domination imposed on the Indians by the Hudson's Bay Company – though, typically, the criticism is cautiously preceded by a rhetorical disclaimer – he also suggests that some Indians have been so alienated by European values that they have adapted their behaviour to European expec-

tations and, more crucially, have even adopted their conceptual and discursive categories: only acculturated Indians call 'indolent' those of their people who still live according to the local customs.

Even more interesting is the ambiguity of the conclusion. While it would seem that Hearne is reiterating his attachment to the European notion of work, a closer analysis of the passage makes it clear that his emphasis on what is *undoubtedly* the *duty* of any company's employee reveals that he is speaking these words without actually endorsing them. The ensuing self-justification only increases the ambiguity, as one feels that Hearne is merely paying lip service to the values of the people on whom, after all, he depends not for his life but for a living. This analysis is confirmed by the very end of the passage, which effects a final inversion characteristically preceded by yet another rhetorical disclaimer. Hearne's contention is clearly that far from exerting a civilizing influence on Indians, European values actually alienate them, a highly subversive suggestion given the representation of Indians which then prevailed: '[The Indians are] not only averse to toil, but incapable of it; and when roused by force from their native indolence, and compelled to work, they [sink] under tasks which the people of the other continent would have performed with ease', Robertson claimed in his extremely influential *History*.[48]

A study of the narrative's growing ideological instability makes it possible to grasp the full extent of the explorer's evolution and, consequently, the change in the power dynamics in his interactions with the Indians. As we know, three expeditions had to be organized by Hearne before he successfully reached the copper ore, and the third one is markedly different from the first two, as it is characterized by Hearne's explicit contestation of official hierarchy:

> He [Governor Norton] again wanted to force some of the home-guard Indians (who were his relations) into our company ... But I had found them of so little use in my two former attempts, that I absolutely refused them; and by doing so, offended Mr Norton to such a degree, that neither time nor absence could ever afterwards eradicate his dislike of me; so that at my return he used every means in his power to treat me ill, and to render my life unhappy. However, to deal with candour on this occasion, it must be acknowledged to his honour, that whatever our private animosities might have been, he did not suffer them to interfere with public business.[49]

Hearne's changed attitude results from his analysis of the failure of the first two expeditions, which he retrospectively attributes to an excessive compliance with the Company's instructions to the detriment of the advice provided by Indians.[50] By entrusting the fate of his third attempt to Matonabbee, Hearne implicitly acknowledges Indian experience as a valid, legitimate source of knowledge, which by the same token partly 'decentres', so to speak, Prince of Wales's Fort as a symbol of European power: '[there is] sufficient proof of the singular advantage which a native of this country has over an Englishman, when *at such a distance*

from the Company's Factories as to depend entirely on them for subsistence' (my emphasis).[51] The Indian guide, not the English explorer, has been turned into the decision-maker, a reversal of roles that Hearne accepts somewhat reluctantly at first: 'As I could not pretend to contradict him, I was entirely reconciled to his proposal', he remarks when his guide deems it more reasonable to stop in order to winter. Hearne eventually comes to take the Indian's authority for granted, as is evinced in the following remark: 'at the solicitation of my guide Matonabbee, I sent a letter post-haste to the Chief at Prince of Wales's Fort'.[52]

From then on, cooperation rather than domination governs Hearne's relationships to Indians and this in turns leads to a change in the Englishman's perception of otherness. Alterity is increasingly apprehended in explicative rather than axiological terms, a change which is manifested textually in the mounting occurrences of phrases such as 'to account for' and 'owing to'.[53] Puzzlement leads not to judgement but to explanation, as when Hearne is 'at a loss to account for [the] unusual œconomy of [his] companions' on an occasion when food was plentiful, but then adds: '[I] was soone informed, that those preparations were made with a view to have victuals enough ready-cooked to serve us to the river's mouth'.[54] The distance between the Englishman and his Indian fellow travellers thus appears to be conversely proportional to that which separates him from the Fort, that is to say the place of symbolic power validating his authority: the further away the Fort, the less efficacious European knowledge, and the closer European and Indian cultures seem to become.

It may be argued that an explorer like Cook constantly interprets the new semiotic systems that he encounters according to the one with which he is familiar, and therefore de facto always denies the novelty of the unknown by reducing it to the familiar.[55] Hearne's experience, on the contrary, deeply affects the perception he has of his surrounding environment. The relation he makes of his first meeting with his Indian guide is evidence of such transformation. The feature that he chooses to emphasize is 'The courteous behaviour of this stranger'. Innocuous though it may sound to our modern ears, such a remark questions a taxonomic dichotomy that was at the core of eighteenth-century European episteme, namely the – hierarchical – opposition between civilized and 'savage'. What is more, Hearne's initial remark about Matonabbee is echoed by similar ones about other Indians encountered in the course of the expedition, of whom he admits that 'their civility far exceeded what I could expect from so uncivilized a tribe'. The distance between self and other decreases as Hearne's knowledge of Indian culture increases: not content with subverting traditional assumptions, for instance by implicitly emphasizing that Indians are not naturally prone to drinking but are *made* so by Europeans ('Few of the Northern Indians are fond of spirits, especially those who keep at a distance from the Fort'), he foregrounds the similarities rather than the differences between Europeans and Indians:

'Their skins are soft, smooth, and polished; and when they are dressed in clean clothing, they are as free from an offensive smell as any of the human race'.[56]

In that respect, Hearne's relationship with Matonabbee marks a turning point in the evolution of his conceptual framework. The guide is portrayed as a man of 'penetration and judgment', 'of universal knowledge', and 'of extensive observation with respect to the times, seasons, and places',[57] a set of personal features that not only establishes the Indian as the Englishman's intellectual equal, but also goes against the traditional representation of Indians as devoid of any power of abstraction, a common assumption at the time and, again, one that Robertson contributed to spreading:

> A naked savage, cowering over the fire in his miserable cabin, or stretched under a few branches which afford him a temporary shelter, has as little inclination as capacity for useless speculation. His thoughts extend not beyond what relates to animal life; and when they are not directed towards some of its concerns, his mind is totally inactive.[58]

Once more going beyond such dichotomies, Hearne gradually perceives in Matonabbee all the characteristics that were said to define the civilized man, such as sensitivity, kindness ('I found my new acquaintance, on all occasions, the most sociable, kind, and sensible Indian I had ever met with'[59]), intelligence and good manners: when Hearne offers Matonabbee to hire him as a guide, the latter 'readily consent[s], and with a freedom of speech and correctness of language not commonly met with among Indians'. Hearne comments:

> It is impossible for any man to have been more punctual in the performance of a promise than he was; his scrupulous adherence to truth and honesty would have done honour to the most enlightened and devout Christian, while his benevolence and universal humanity to all the human race, according to his abilities and manner of life, could not be exceeded by the most illustrious personage now on record.[60]

One could not be further away from the stereotypic representation of otherness in terms of 'endless negative differences'[61] whereby the 'savage' is envisaged by default as it were, as a creature devoid of all the qualities that constitute the fabric of the civilized man, from clothes and property to the culture of shame. The interactions between Matonaabee and Hearne turn into a true relationship of mutual friendship, something attested by the fact that when La Pérouse captured the Fort in 1782 and Hearne, then governor, was carried off as prisoner, Matonabbee is said to have hanged himself.

The Anthropology of Curiosity

That the blossoming relationship between Hearne and Matonabbee should heighten the interest of the narrative is undeniable, but far more interesting are its epistemological consequences: the conditions of the production of knowl-

edge change as Hearne gradually renounces the responsibility of the expedition and can thus give free rein to his powers of observation, becoming an anthropologist *avant la lettre* who collapses rather than emphasizes the difference between self and other.

'The calculating eye reconfigures; the curious eye incorporates', Cheryl Cundell astutely observes.[62] Though it does not originally apply to Samuel Hearne, her distinction neatly summarizes his cognitive attitude in the third expedition. Bearing in mind the caveat that the history of curiosity should not be envisaged as a clearly defined linear narrative,[63] it is generally argued that the reign of theology was succeeded in the eighteenth century by that of 'curiosity'. The so-called 'Scientific Revolution', epitomized by Galileo's telescopic observations that 'proved' the Copernican hypothesis, constituted a turning point in the history of curiosity: from a mark of dangerous human presumption or even a vice (as *mala* or *vana curiositas*) in Greek philosophy and the Church fathers, curiosity increasingly became associated with the praiseworthy search for scientific knowledge. The abandonment of such 'self-restriction' paved the way for the Enlightenment and the legitimation of curiosity, which in turn ushered in modernity.[64] From then onwards, the Inuit, Polynesians, Aboriginal Australians and North American Indians would become fertile sources of speculation about global history and society.

In Hearne's case, curiosity is to be understood as both a 'cognitive passion'[65] and as his particular response at experiencing the new and the unfamiliar. Neither a polymath traveller, nor a natural scientist, Hearne was a simple, uneducated man, but I want to suggest that it most certainly was this lack of education that paradoxically made for the attention to detail and lack of prejudice that turned out to be his signature. Hearne's unfiltered perception of the world is as valuable to us today as was his reliance on the visual manifestation of knowledge so typical of the Enlightenment episteme, according to Michel Foucault.[66] His circumstantiality goes against the taxonomic impulse said to be typical of the classical age and makes him meet men rather than Man. Though he claimed to have written his text in the 'plain style' prescribed by the Royal Society, he also de facto positioned himself outside the system of classification of nature propounded by natural scientists when he prided himself on not describing people and animals 'in a scientific manner'.[67]

Larry Wolf persuasively argues that if artistic perspective was one of the defining features of the Renaissance, 'the Enlightenment may correspondingly be characterized by the discovery of cultural perspective'.[68] Burke's letter to William Robertson in 1777 – Hearne was then a celebrated explorer and had been appointed governor of Prince of Wales's Fort – clearly illustrates the point:

> Now the Great map of Mankind in unrolled at once; and there is no state or Gradation of barbarism, and no mode of refinement which we have not at the same time under our View. The very different Civility of Europe and of China; the barbarism of Tartary, and of Arabia. The Savage State of North America, and of New Zealand.[69]

But while for Burke and some of his like-minded contemporaries, the discovery of new civilizations only served to confirm stadial theory, the perspectival shift mostly brought about a radical change in the conception of otherness and led to the birth of what Harry Liebersohn called 'anthropology before anthropology'.[70] Long before the 1850s, which saw the advent of anthropology as a scientific discipline, numerous eighteenth-century travelogues evinced characteristics not unlike those to be found in modern ethnographic studies, with their accounts of life among the natives, their questioning of previous accounts and a clear stance on controversial issues.

Hearne is a case in point. His overall positioning is much closer to that of the modern anthropologist than to that of the classic adventurer. Not only does he view the natives that he encounters as beings whose thoughts and habits of life are interesting per se, but authority and knowledge are presented as the end-result of a process of exchange and communication. Hearne often gets his data from the Indians, whom he quotes as reliable sources of 'information'.[71] Besides, his account contains an embedded meta-discourse about his own method, which he defines against that of 'the romancing [i.e. lying] traveller', who values aesthetics over the reliability of facts and whose 'marvellous tales, however smoothly they may be told, or however boldly they may be asserted', cannot be trusted.[72] Hearne goes on to draw a very interesting distinction between 'authority' and 'the *real* state and oeconomy'.[73] The latter can only be ascertained thanks to 'real [i.e., first-hand] experience' and 'eye-witness' accounts,[74] so that the opposition between what is 'commonly reported' and 'the truth' pervades Hearne's narrative.[75] In fact, this more or less explicit dichotomy between two modes of knowledge, one based on hearsay used as a kind of authority argument and another that is akin to nineteenth-century anthropological procedures based on 'field work', is in operation from Hearne's Preface to his narrative, which opposes 'knowing' to 'describing': 'The modes of living, manners, and customs of the natives' have been 'long known' but 'never … described'.[76]

Even far more significant is the blurring of the distinction between the notional categories of civilization and barbarity, in itself symptomatic of the gradual collapse of Hearne's epistemological certainties. Nowhere is this more apparent than in his handling of the archetypal stereotype of cannibalism, 'the cornerstone of absolute otherness' according to Peter Hulme.[77] While an explorer like Cook detaches the eating of human flesh from its cultural context the better to turn it into evidence of a practice that he does not even remotely

attempt to understand,[78] Hearne immediately raises the question of the real significance of such a bewildering occurrence:

> [About having to eat the leather of one's shoes] The relation of such uncommon hardships may perhaps gain little credit in Europe; while those who are conversant with the history of Hudson's Bay, and who are thoroughly acquainted with the distress which the natives of the country about it frequently endure, may consider them as no more than the common occurrences of an Indian life, in which they are frequently driven to the necessity of eating one another.[79]

The explanation – 'necessity' commands – precedes and contextualizes the description of the practice itself, a description that, far from being dramatized and turned into a sensationalist purple patch, is marginalized by being relegated to a footnote:

> It is the general opinion of the Southern Indians, that when any of their tribe has been driven to the necessity of eating human flesh, they become so fond of it, that no person is safe in their company. And though it is well known they are never guilty of making this horrid repast but when driven to it by necessity, yet those who have made it are not only shunned, but so universally detested by all who know them, that no Indians will tent with them, and they are frequently murdered slyly. I have seen several of those poor wretches who, unfortunately for them, have come under the above description, and though they were persons much esteemed before hunger had driven them to this act, were afterward so universally despised and neglected, that a smile never graced their countenances: deep melancholy has been seated on their brows, while the eye most expressively spoke the dictates of the heart, and seemed to say', Why do you despise me for my misfortunes? The period is probably not far distant, when you may be driven to the like necessity![80]

To the overall euphemistic phrasing are added remarks that betray Hearne's compassion – though the possibility that they might be an instance of the editing undergone by his field notes as they were turned into a book cannot be ruled out altogether[81] – so that his discourse on cannibalism is paradoxically characterized both by subjective involvement and objective distancing, Hearne once again proving reluctant to endorse the words he utters.

Moreover, while eighteenth-century travellers often favour a merely visual mode of knowledge, Hearne questions the alleged superiority of European epistemology and therefore seeks to understand what presents itself to him. Thus, referring to the cannibalistic practices, Hearne comments: 'The relation of such uncommon hardships may perhaps gain little credit in Europe; while those who are conversant with the history of Hudson's Bay ... may consider them as no more than the common occurrences of an Indian life'.[82] No information, Hearne implies, is accessible to the explorer who is content with scanning the surface of objects and cultural practices in the belief that they will readily reveal their nature; contextualization and an interpretive effort are always required. Such

an effort is rewarded, as it were, when the text adopts the stylistic features of the sentimental novel, thus providing readers with a familiar horizon of expectations and therefore making it easier for them to identify with Indians. The text abounds in phrases such as 'poor wretches', 'a smile never graced their countenances', 'deep melancholy has been seated on their brows', and, mostly, 'the eye most expressively spoke the dictates of the heart', the latter sounding like a paraphrase of Oliver Goldsmith's famous claim that '[his] head has no share in all [he] write[s]; [his] heart dictates the whole'.[83] The identification process is complete when Hearne 'invites in' an Indian whom he has only just met, 'though [he] saw he had nothing for trade':[84] from objects of study to be maintained at a distance, the Indians have become individuals with whom gratuitous intersubjective relationships are not only possible but desirable.

Hearne's account thus repeatedly, albeit often implicitly, calls into question the traditional dichotomy between 'civilized' and 'barbaric', and this appears particularly clearly in his first encounter with a tribe of Copper Indians, a fascinating scene in which the entire logic of the travelogue is inverted in a manner reminiscent of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*:

> As I was the first whom they had ever seen, and in all probability might be the last, it was curious to see how they flocked about me, and expressed as much desire to examine me from top to toe, as an European Naturalist would a non-descript animal. They, however, found and pronounced me to be a perfect human being, except in the colour of my hair and eyes: the former, they said, was like the stained hair of a buffaloe's tail, and the latter, being light, were like those of a gull. The whiteness of my skin also was, in their opinion, no ornament, as they said it resembled meat which had been sodden in water till all the blood was extracted. On the whole, I was viewed as so great a curiosity in this part of the world, that during my stay there, whenever I combed my head, some or other of them never failed to ask for the hairs that came off, which they carefully wrapped up, saying, 'When I see you again, you shall again see your hair'.[85]

The explorer is himself turned into a 'curiosity', a 'non-descript' *lusus naturae* that has yet to be identified, while one of the Indians is compared with an English natural philosopher. Hearne himself initiates the process of inversion by calling himself an 'animal' and makes his narrative dialogical by allowing the Indians' voice to be heard.

This passage marks a radical shift in the narrative's handling of otherness: alterity gives way to cultural difference as both cultures are submitted to the discriminatory gaze of the ethnographer. From then on, the relativity of the European model is affirmed more firmly. To take but one significant example, the essentialist logic that seems to imbue Hearne's description of Northern Indian women – 'Take them in a body, the women are as destitute of real beauty as any nation I ever saw' – is belied by the rest of the description, since the initial overgeneralization is to be understood as part of an explanatory mode of analysis

that eventually leads to an assertion of cultural relativism. Hearne both accounts for the coarseness of the physical appearance of women – it is due to a life of hard labour devoted to the well-being of their families – and justifies the fact that in the local context beauty should not be a valid criterion when choosing a spouse: 'In a country like this, where a partner in excessive hard labour is the chief motive for the union, and the softer endearments of conjugal life only considered as a secondary object, there seems to be great propriety in such a choice'. His conclusion on that matter is a clear assertion of cultural relativism: '[This is] a certain proof that there is no such thing as any rule or standard of beauty'. The humour of what immediately follows is further evidence of Hearne's distantiation from Eurocentric norms:

> Ask a Northern Indian, what is beauty? He will answer, a broad flat face, small eyes, high cheek-bones, three or four broad black lines a-cross each cheek, a low forehead, a large broad chin, a clumsy hook-nose, a tawny hide, and breasts hanging down to the belt. Those beauties are greatly heightened, or at least rendered more valuable, when the possessor is capable of dressing all kinds of skins, converting them into different parts of their clothing, and able to carry eight or ten stone in Summer, or haul a much greater weight in Winter.[86]

The passage ends with a reiteration of the relativity of cultural norms: 'the method of treating or serving [women] at meals [would] appear very humiliating, to an European woman, though custom makes it sit light on those whose lot it is to bear it'.[87] It is striking to see how the notion of cultural relativism, once a given for Hearne, seems to have become a sort of game for him: the explorer-turned-anthropologist deliberately transforms himself into an object of analysis and submits himself to the gaze of the Indians. Thus, the description of the manner in which a woman went on with the journey after a particularly difficult delivery (which according to Hearne lasted no less than fifty-two hours) is followed by comparative generalizations about the various practices surrounding birth in the Canadian North and in Europe:

> When a Northern Indian woman is taken in labour, a small tent is erected for her, at such a distance from the other tents that her cries cannot easily be heard, and the other women and young girls are her constant visitants: no male, except children in arms, ever offers to approach her. It is a circumstance perhaps to be lamented, that these people never attempt to assist each other on those occasions, even in the most critical cases. This is in some measure owing to delicacy, but more probably to an opinion they entertain that nature is abundantly sufficient to perform every thing required, without any external help whatever.[88]

Once more, the explanatory mode is favoured over judgement and far from instrumentalizing this episode to 'prove' the barbarity of all things non-European, Hearne inverts the civilized/barbaric dichotomy by putting down to 'delicacy' a

practice that Europeans would in all probability regard as callous. This taxonomic inversion turns into a burlesque when European mores are ridiculed:

> When I informed them of the assistance which European women derive from the skill and attention of our midwives, they treated it with the utmost contempt; ironically observing, 'that the many hump-backs, bandy-legs, and other deformities, so frequent among the English, were undoubtedly owing to the great skill of the persons who assisted in bringing them into the world, and to the extraordinary care of their nurses afterward'.[89]

Inverted commas notwithstanding, the words are Hearne's, and the repetition of the expression 'owing to', used a few lines above in his own account, de facto reduces the distance between the two cultures and, textually at least, places them on a par.

Though Hearne claimed that his only ambition in writing his narrative was 'to afford amusement' to his readers,[90] his depiction of Chipewyan Indians is far more complex than most eighteenth-century European ethnographic portraiture, which, to take up Peter Mason's words, tended to 'exoticiz[e] ... the inhabitants of the non-European world'.[91] *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort ... to the Northern Ocean* may be regarded as typical of the shift in the conception of curiosity between the beginning and the end of the eighteenth century, which according to George Rousseau eventually encompassed persons as well as objects.[92] That Hearne's experience is best envisaged in phenomenological terms is confirmed by the transformation that he underwent as a result, as was to be emphasized in his obituary: 'he had lived so long where money was of no use that he seemed insensible of its value here, and lent it with little or no security to those he was scarcely acquainted with by name'.[93] Whether this is true or not, it is worth remembering that during the third expedition only, Hearne spent eighteen months and twenty-three days with the Indians and had no intercourse whatsoever with Europeans.

His travelogue then went on to become part and parcel of the vast corpus of texts about Indians published in the eighteenth century, which as early as 1750 was compulsory reading for any philosophical discussion on human nature.[94] With its idiosyncratic blend of the scientific with the mundane, Hearne's narrative does not really exemplify the discursive order of the Enlightenment but, rather, is part of what Christian Moser, opposing Georg Forster's methods to Cook's, called 'an early awareness of innovative means to produce knowledge in the fields of natural history and anthropology'.[95] In that respect, Hearne's text indirectly calls into question the validity of the very notion of progress. While the ethnographic endeavour has been defined as the gradual eradication of epistemological mistakes,[96] some critics point out that 'learned authority [is nevertheless] compatible with gross prejudice and systematic distortion'.[97]

Any travelogue constructs reality as much as it describes it and no explorer can ever see the world 'as it is', as is evinced by Hearne's constant ambivalence about Indians. Interestingly, his text testifies to a final change in perspective that inscribes itself within an imperialist framework once again. Indeed, years after the exploration journeys themselves, when Hearne was back in England, he revised his own judgement about Indians, claiming that his earlier vision had been 'short-sighte[d]' and emphasizing the fact that the Indians, now deprived of any contact whatsoever with the Hudson's Bay Company, had 'now sunk back into their original barbarism and extreme indigence'. It is as if the distance, both geographical and temporal, that now sets him apart from those he used to call his 'companions' led Hearne to distance himself from them culturally, as if ethnographic perspective were possible only as part of daily intersubjective relationships. And yet, in an ultimate twist, even such notations are not devoid of contradictions, since Hearne hastens to add that Europeans are the cause of the 'war' between tribes, as they left among them 'a few remnants of iron-work'.[98]

8 ALEXANDER MACKENZIE'S SEARCH FOR THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE: THE COMMERCIAL IMPERATIVE (1789–93)

Robert Sayre

In the long history of the colonial quest to discover the Northwest Passage – the 'Strait of Anian' or the route to the 'Sea of the West' in some earlier versions – Alexander Mackenzie's two expeditions in 1789 and 1793 come at a pivotal time and play a significant role. They also exemplify in an extreme form one crucial aspect of the search from the start: the economic impetus. In this chapter I will argue that while other explorations associated with the search were often impelled by multiple motivations – of which the economic one had more or less weight in different instances – Mackenzie's participation in the quest was driven by a thoroughly commercial imperative. I will also attempt to demonstrate how an entrepreneurial mentality pervades the account of his trips in search of the Passage.

Mackenzie's Expeditions in Context

After the initial explorations of the Hudson Bay area by the English, and of Baja California northwards by the Spanish, for a long period much of the pursuit of a practicable route across North America that would give easier access to the Orient came from the French. Starting in the late seventeenth century, *coureurs de bois*, adventurers and officially-sponsored leaders of expeditions attempted to penetrate beyond the Mississippi; one of their goals was to reach the Pacific, and China beyond. Often, though not always, these forays were related to the fur trade. The motives of those who took part in the expeditions were usually mixed. In addition to the prospect of profitable commercial endeavours – whether through furs, discovery of precious metals, dealings with the Spanish or a route to the Orient – many other factors could come into play: curiosity or scientific interest, imperial strategy (to contain the English and the Spanish), missionary zeal, a taste for unconstrained living or for personal glory, and the allure of Indian women.[1] As for the fur trade itself, Richard White has emphasized that, as practised by the French, it was never ruled entirely by the profit

motive. French traders were still to some extent guided by the idea of 'just price', and the need to maintain political alliances with Indians was paramount also in the exchange of furs.[2]

The most extensive French explorations in the northwest in the mid-eighteenth century – combining fur trade activities with the search for the 'Sea of the West' – were made by the La Vérendryes, father and sons, who pushed as far west as the Saskatchewan River in Canada, and far into the Great Plains further south, possibly to the Big Horn mountains of northern Wyoming.[3] Following on the defeat of the French in the early 1760s, further probes to the west were effected by English and Anglo-Americans, both as part of the development of the fur trade and in search of a 'Northwest Passage', as they termed it. The militiaman Robert Rogers planned a major exploratory effort of the latter kind, but only the first phase of it was carried out – by Jonathan Carver in 1766–8.[4] Carver only reached the eastern part of the Plains, but in the 1770s the fur trader Alexander Henry went further west, approaching the Rockies.[5] To the north, British traders began in this period to extend beyond the Hudson Bay 'factories', with companies aggressively competing among themselves to control trade in new territories. British expeditions in search of the Passage also proliferated, of which Samuel Hearne's (1769–72) were the most consequential.

It was in this context that Alexander Mackenzie's ventures occurred. Having been engaged in fur trading in the region, Mackenzie started off from Lake Athabasca, nearly the furthest point north and west that had been reached by Europeans up to that point. From there he made not one but two trips aimed at discovering the Passage, since the first, from June to September 1789, took him to the Arctic Ocean instead of the Pacific. He saw this first attempt as a failure, though he was the first European to explore the large river – later named after him – that runs into the Arctic from Great Slave Lake above Lake Athabasca. Mackenzie embarked on the second trip several years later (1793), following the course of another river running out of Athabasca – the Peace – which flowed more directly west. He succeeded this time in reaching the Pacific, but did not find a continuous water passage. The expedition was obliged to portage across the Rockies. On the far side they found what later came to be called the Fraser River, then once again travelled overland until they encountered the Bella Coola River, which finally took them to the coast.

Although not immediately acknowledged, the significance and implications of Mackenzie's two journeys soon became apparent and his findings were utilized by later explorers and planners of exploration. Along with Hearne's earlier excursions, and George Vancouver's contemporaneous probings of the North Pacific coastline (1792–4), Mackenzie's trips north and west clearly belied speculations about a Strait of Anian or Sea of the West, and indicated that no Northwest Passage – in the sense of a single waterway – existed below the Arctic Sea. The first trip

seemed also to suggest that there was none above either, since the Arctic appeared thoroughly ice-bound.[6] These findings of course did not stop the search for the Passage altogether, but simply deflected it further and further north. While explorations continued in the areas around and below Mackenzie's second itinerary – Simon Fraser's on the river that took his name (1808), and David Thompson's down the Columbia River to its mouth (1811) – in the early nineteenth century the continuing quest for the Passage itself moved far north. At the same time, the quest's centre of motivational gravity shifted. No longer closely associated with the fur trade, its principal *raisons d'être* came to be scientific and political.

While Mackenzie's voyages thus come at the end of one period and the beginning of another, there was a symbolic (and practical) point of contact between the two. As John Franklin prepared his first land expedition (1819–22) to further chart the coast of the Arctic, he met with Mackenzie in London in 1818. The latter offered him, in his words, 'much valuable information and advice'.[7]

A Canadian Hero?

In Canada especially, and to some extent in Britain and the United States, Alexander Mackenzie has become a legendary figure. Like many other explorers he has taken on a quasi-mythical status, and much of the literature about him treats him in the heroic mode. His penetration to the northwest coast at an early date is frequently credited with playing a key role in securing what became British Columbia against annexation by the United States. In Canada praise for him is therefore often couched in nationalistic terms, and he is considered a founding father. Derek Hayes's recent, lavishly-illustrated work on Mackenzie is a case in point. The opening chapter is entitled 'A Real Canadian Hero'.[8]

Many studies of Mackenzie – sometimes treated alone, sometimes along with other explorers – are enthusiastic celebrations of the man, emphasizing his courage and leadership, and the thrilling quality of his 'adventures'.[9] A number of outdoorsman admirers have also wanted to retrace the paths of his journeys themselves.[10] Several early works evoke the notion of knightliness in regard to Mackenzie as well as to fellow explorers. In 1920 a popular narrative of the exploits of northwest explorers was titled *Knights Errant of the Wilderness*, and in 1946 a fictionalized version of Mackenzie's life aimed at young people appeared under the title *Knight of the Wilderness*.[11] But the idea of nobility of purpose and action continued to be applied, implicitly or explicitly, to Mackenzie in later works as well.[12]

More specifically, Roy Daniells, author of several works on him, suggests that on his explorations Mackenzie was 'a man totally absorbed in carrying out, for its own sake, what he had begun'.[13] And Derek Hayes claims that 'Mackenzie was, first and foremost, an explorer in the true sense of the word. Although his bread

and butter was the fur trade, he also had a large dose of that idea of wanting to know the unknown, of wanting to see for himself what was over the next mountain'.[14] It is this image of Mackenzie as a selfless, devoted explorer bent on a quest for its own sake that I wish to challenge in this essay.

Although a non-critical, often romanticized approach has tended to predominate in the writing about Mackenzie, several studies have made more lucid appraisals and painted a less heroic picture. First of all it seems clear, as James K. Smith points out, that Mackenzie's two journeys in search of the Passage, far from being defining moments, were 'minor episodes' for the man who made them, in a long career otherwise fully focused on the fur trade.[15] It was commerce, indeed, and not exploration, that moulded and defined Mackenzie's character. Unlike his cousin Roderick, who found himself ill suited to the fur trade and longed to leave it, Mackenzie was a master of it and thrived in its environment – the environment of business, that is, for Mackenzie was largely indifferent to the natural surroundings of the particular kind of trade he was engaged in. Barry Gough, author of his most recent biography, espouses this view of Mackenzie, and sees in commerce – rather than devotion to imperial aims, a yen for discovery or love of the outdoors – the crux of Mackenzie's being. He argues that '[i]n Mackenzie's business activities are to be found the secret to his motivations, to his aspirations for the British Empire in northern latitudes and on northern seas, and to his future hopes ... The wilderness offered him a place for profitable speculation, and he mastered it to fulfill his private aims of personal wealth'.[16]

As carried on by the British, who had to a large extent replaced the French at the end of the eighteenth century, the business of trading in furs in the northwestern Canadian wilds was a far more harshly competitive enterprise than it had been for their predecessors – a 'cutthroat' one, indeed, sometimes in the most literal sense, in that violent, occasionally fatal confrontations between rival traders occurred. But figurative assaults were no less ferocious. In these circumstances, to master the field required a hardened disposition. It is not surprising, then, that 'ruthlessness' is often mentioned as one of Mackenzie's predominant character traits. One of his editors emphasizes that he 'had bitter enemies and was capable of being a bitter enemy himself ... [H]is treatment of opponents shows that he could be ruthless. He was in a dirty trade and his business ethics did not rise above those of the trade'.[17]

Conjoining Imperial Interest and Private Enterprise

A Scotsman like many of the British fur traders,[18] Mackenzie was brought to North America as a boy. At age fifteen he began working as a clerk in a small fur trading firm in Montreal. He subsequently became a partner in the establishment, and moved out to actual fur territories west of Lake Superior to supervise

operations. In 1787 his firm merged with the larger North West Company, and he was sent to Lake Athabasca with an older associate of the latter, Peter Pond. Although Mackenzie hardly mentions Pond in his book on the expeditions, it was he who was at the origin of the plan to seek the Passage. Pond was an American from Connecticut, who after engaging in the fur trade further south had come to the northwest in 1775. In the early 1780s he became interested in the prospect of the Northwest Passage. On reading James Cook's account of his probings along the northern Pacific coast in 1778, in which he reported what he took to be the mouth of a large river, Pond had surmised that that river must originate in, or at least run through, the region in which he was trading. After collecting information from Indians, traders and *voyageurs,* he concluded that the river ran out of Great Slave Lake. He drew up a first hypothetical map in 1784, then a second in 1787.[19] He seems to have intended to make an expedition himself to prove his theory, but finally instead convinced Mackenzie to take on the mission during the winter they spent together on Lake Athabasca. The following year Pond left the northwest, and never returned. Pond was a competitive, combative trader like Mackenzie, and clearly held the same mercenary aims in his single-minded pursuit of the Passage – though he ultimately renounced them for himself and passed them on to Mackenzie.[20]

The inaccuracy of Pond's maps was of course one of the sources of Mackenzie's failure, on the first trip, to reach the Pacific. Mackenzie also had undertaken the trip without any sophisticated equipment for calculating longitude and position. Nor was he trained to use such equipment. So, on the advice of a surveyor, he acquired both apparatuses and instruction while in London during the period between the two trips (1791–2). He also learned while there that a reward of £20,000 was being offered by Parliament for the discovery of the Northwest Passage, and this plausibly was a factor in his decision to persevere in the search after the initial disappointment.[21] When he set out again to follow the Peace River where it might lead in 1793, he probably had at least three aims in mind, all of which were mercenary in nature: to earn the reward for finding the Passage, to make contact with new Indian tribes that could be brought into the fur trade, and, most importantly, to take the first steps toward setting up a western commercial conduit to the Orient. As he wrote with some bravado to his cousin Roderick in May 1793, from the point on the Peace where he had wintered: 'I send you a couple of Guineas. The rest I take with me to traffick with the Russians'.[22] According to Mackenzie's plan, the Russians, who had established several posts on the coast, were potential intermediaries with the Chinese.

In any event, Mackenzie met with no Russians on reaching the Pacific in July. Partly, no doubt, because he had encountered some apparently hostile Indians, but also because the travelling season was already well advanced, instead of proceeding further he returned immediately to Athabasca by the route he had taken.

After spending the winter of 1793–4 there, he left the fur country for Montreal. In another letter to Roderick written while still at the Lake Athabasca fort, he shows a strong distaste for this wilderness area, and impatience to leave.[23] Like Peter Pond, he never returned. Mackenzie did not leave the fur trade, however. On the contrary, being in Montreal put him in a position to participate more actively in the direction of the business, with all of the manoeuvres and conflicts that that entailed. Fierce infighting within the North West Company led him to form a break-off firm in 1800, after issuing dire threats against a rival in the North West Company.[24] He continued to be involved in kaleidoscopic business stratagems until finally returning permanently to Britain in 1805.

Other traders in the North West Company were for the most part indifferent or even hostile towards his explorations upon his return – because these had not brought immediate benefits – and were uninterested in following up on them. But Mackenzie turned to British colonial officials in an attempt to convince them to establish bases on the northwest Pacific coast, which could serve as relays in a trade route to the Orient. Although he had not found the Northwest Passage, he was convinced that even with some overland travel necessary, a highly profitable movement of trade – involving fish as well as furs – could be set up in a westward direction as a complement to the eastward one. As James Smith points out, '[h]is plan neatly conjoined imperial interest and private enterprise', and he hoped to be granted a charter by the British government.[25] He was, however, never able to obtain British approval and collaboration. Far from being committed to working with the British alone, Mackenzie made several attempts to bring American entrepreneurs into his scheme, but there also met with only limited success.[26]

Transforming Failure into Success

Mackenzie's book – his accounts of the exploratory journeys preceded by an essay on the fur trade – can itself be seen as an intervention in view of forwarding his commercial project. For although Mackenzie employed a ghostwriter to edit his original manuscript,[27] surely with the purpose of increasing its appeal to a broad public avid for the literature of exploration, it was also aimed at a more limited public of colonial administrators and traders who might become convinced of the feasibility of his ideas of developing a new trade network.

The book appeared in London in 1801, under the title *Voyages from Montreal on the River St. Laurence through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in the Years 1789 and 1793, with a preliminary account of the rise, progress, and present state of the fur trade of that country*. This title is curiously inaccurate, since the travel narratives themselves start from Lake Athabasca and not Montreal. Milo Quaife, the editor of the Lakeside Press edition of Mackenzie's account of the 1793 voyage alone, notices the inaccuracy of the original title

without attempting to elucidate it.[28] A possible explanation, however, is that the preliminary account of the fur trade includes a detailed description of the route habitually followed by the annual fur trading expeditions from and to Montreal.

The work went through several editions and translations in the years immediately following its first appearance, achieving considerable success. But as it contained, for its more targeted audience, much detailed factual material such as miles covered, compass directions and astronomical readings, later nineteenth-century editions were often abridged.[29]

In the preface to *Voyages*, Mackenzie opens by linking his explorations both to commerce and to the discovery of the Northwest Passage. 'I was led', he informs the reader somewhat complacently, 'at an early period of life, by commercial views, to the country north-west of Lake Superior ... and being endowed by nature with an inquisitive mind and enterprising spirit ... contemplated the practicability of penetrating across the continent of America'.[30] He then presents his 1789 trip as having resolved the question of the Passage: 'The first voyage has settled the dubious point of a practicable North-West Passage; and I trust it has set that long agitated question to rest'.[31] James Smith points out that this presentation of the matter is disingenuous, implying as it does that his purpose was 'to prove or disprove' the existence of the Passage, whereas in a note attached to the manuscript version of the account of the first trip Mackenzie clearly states that 'I went this expedition in hopes of getting into Cook's River' and recognizes that 'I was disappointed in this'.[32] Moreover, in a report to Lord Dorchester, Governor General of British North America, Mackenzie acknowledges the same, while also mentioning Pond, and concluding that his trip 'proved that Mr. Pond's assertion was nothing but conjecture'.[33] In the work for the general public, in other words, Mackenzie on the one hand transforms a failure into a success, and on the other eliminates all traces of Pond as the originator of the plan.

There is another equivocation at work as well, though, in the statement of aims in the preface. For Mackenzie differentiates his goal in the second trip from that of the first, and presents it too as having met with success: 'These objects being accomplished [by the first trip], I returned, to determine the practicability of a commercial communication through the continent of North America ... which is proved by my second journal'.[34] This representation of the case hides the fact that Mackenzie indeed still hoped to find an itinerary to the Pacific *entirely by water* – the famous Passage, in effect – when he undertook the 1793 journey, and that in this he again failed.

In the concluding pages of his work, in which Mackenzie puts forward his scheme of a unified trade network to be controlled by the British, there is a further slippage of meaning surrounding the notion of the Passage. Comparing the situation of Asia to America, Mackenzie claims that, as the Russians 'opened an interior communication by rivers, *etc.* [italics mine]' in the former, so the British

could in the latter, since the existence of a 'passage ... through the continent [is] clearly proved'.[35] The search for a passage by water has thus been transformed into one for a passage – by whatever means – usable for commercial exploitation, and Mackenzie claims to have succeeded in establishing the existence of the latter.

Immediately following the preface that frames the work comes the long introductory section on the fur trade. That the first part of a work purporting to recount voyages of exploration should open in this way makes it abundantly clear that for the author, not only are the two kinds of activity closely bound, but the fur trade has precedence: it provides necessary context for the voyages, which are in a sense subsumed under it. Although entitled 'A General History of the Fur Trade from Canada to the North-West', and though there is some material on the early French trade, most of the work concerns the recent British period, giving a close description of the constitutive elements and *modus operandi* of the trade in the present. The author's treatment makes it clear that the fur trade in its contemporary form is a modern commercial industry – organized for efficiency, profit-maximizing, hierarchical and competitive. Mackenzie fully identifies with this industry, animated as it is by the same 'spirit of enterprise' that he has proclaimed in the preface to characterize both his own make-up and the collective ethos of Britain. In discussing those who are in one way or another connected with the trade, the author always measures categories of people in terms of their usefulness to those who direct and profit from it. The French *coureurs de bois*, who continue to work for British employers, are deemed 'extremely useful to the merchants' in spite of their dissolute ways, and they are praised for their respectfulness and sense of subordination.[36] Similarly, the missionaries who often accompanied exploratory ventures into new areas are said to have been 'of great service to the commanders who engaged in those distant expeditions, and spread the fur trade'.[37]

The Indians – those other workers who provide the furs – are of course of the greatest service of all, and Mackenzie's analysis of the functioning of the fur trade reveals their entrapment and servitude within the system. In discussing the competition between the Hudson's Bay Company, which obliged the Indians to bring the furs to their trading posts, and the North West Company, which sent canoes out to the Indian villages, Mackenzie notes that the Indians had to pay higher prices to the latter, but in some cases were willing to do so because they spent most or all of what they earned from the former to buy the very ammunition they used up in hunting while on their way to the HBC posts.[38] The author is aware that no matter whether they chose one or the other company, the Indians were unfree agents, caught in the meshes of the trade, since they were compelled to 'exchange their furs for such European articles as were now become necessary to them'.[39] The text acknowledges that this situation has in some cases

led to conflict and violence between natives and traders, as the bitter competition has done between traders.[40]

The author offers no expression of moral judgement concerning this state of affairs. His only source of concern is that the trade as he describes it is enormously costly for the traders, because of the lengthiness and difficulty of transportation of the goods. Profit margins are often small, and returns are at risk. Hence the need to find a new conduit to the west, which explains Mackenzie's interest and engagement in the search for the Passage in the first place, and the voyages of which the narrative is to follow. As James Smith nicely puts it, 'Mackenzie, an exceedingly profit-minded Scot, was determined to lessen the tremendous imbalance between expenditure and income in the Northwest trade. His first attempt to do so was his voyage of 1789'.[41]

Mackenzie's Self-Portrayal

We may now turn to the narratives of travel themselves. In these accounts, what seems most revealing and significant is on the one hand the way in which Mackenzie portrays himself on the expeditions – the persona he constructs – and on the other the kinds of relations that this persona is represented as having with others and with the environment, as manifested through the narration.

The authorial persona is first of all defined as the absolute prime mover of the expeditions, their sole instigator (Peter Pond having been eliminated from the picture) and only leader. In depicting these undertakings, Mackenzie sidelines to a large extent his status as trader, and brings to the fore the more glorified role of explorer and discoverer, under the aegis of the imperial power of Britain (he has told the reader in the preface that he will be 'unfolding countries hitherto unexplored, and which I presume, may now be considered as a part of the British dominions').[42] The explorer's main goal in this instance is to cover terrain and reach a destination, and this is significantly different from the author's habitual activities. Yet strikingly, Mackenzie applies many facets of the trader's characteristic mentality to the new task.

When circumstances permit, Mackenzie does in fact engage in some trading on the side, and when they don't, he tries on occasion to set up future trading possibilities.[43] The trading, then, never entirely ceases, and the reader is periodically reminded of Mackenzie's enduring zeal for dealing in peltries. But the main thrust of Mackenzie's energies is now directed towards the objective of reaching a place – the Pacific Ocean – an objective which, as he presents it, he alone has determined to achieve, and which he demonstrates that he pursued single-mindedly, even obsessively, throughout the trips.

Repeatedly the text emphasizes the extreme urgency of this goal for the author personally. It is 'the project on which my heart was set, and in which my

whole mind was occupied', or his 'darling project' as he calls it when the goal comes tantalizingly near. At just this point, though, seemingly insurmountable obstacles loom, and the author avers that the prospect of having to turn back produces in him 'sensations little short of agony'.[44]

This intensity of purpose leads Mackenzie to focus on time. Time is of the essence in achieving the projected goal, and the author often signals either satisfaction at not having wasted time or anxiety at having lost valuable time. Consulting his watch regularly is of great importance, and he notes with wonder in his journal once: 'I was so busily employed in collecting intelligence from our conductors that I last night forgot to wind up my timepiece, and it was the only instance of such an act of negligence since I left Fort Chepewyan'.[45] Indeed, as Kathleen Venema has demonstrated through a close linguistic analysis, Mackenzie dramatizes 'temporal crisis' throughout his narrative.[46] For Venema this 'thematization' of time is part of a larger discourse of imperial mastery, but we might add that the preoccupation with time and its efficient management is characteristic of commercial dealings as well.

In the above quotation concerning his watch, the author excuses his 'negligence' by the fact that he was 'busily employed' in attempting to gain information. This points to another aspect of Mackenzie's self-portrayal in the text. He is described as almost continually applying himself, through thought and action, to achieving his purpose. He not only steadily applies energy, but directs that energy rationally. He disciplines and controls himself so as to attain maximum efficiency, reining in any impulsive desires or emotions that might get in the way. Thus, in the narrative these latter appear almost exclusively in others, while he, as he has already told the reader in the preface, 'had ... the passions and fears of others to control and subdue'.[47] When he occasionally lapses, temporarily losing his calm, making an impetuous gesture or an imprudent decision as he judges it with hindsight, the author takes himself severely to task, recognizing that in those cases he may have jeopardized his mission. In one passage, for instance, he tells of his 'very painful mortification' at having committed 'an act of indiscretion which might have put an end to the voyage that I had so much at heart'.[48] In so doing, he underscores for the reader his overall seriousness of purpose and total commitment to his objective.

Employer and Employees

Mackenzie's fixation on accomplishing his aim at whatever cost also results in systematically instrumentalizing those who were in any way associated with the trip, both Europeans and Indians – among the latter both those who were members of the party and those encountered along the way. Moreover, Mackenzie's overweening sense of self leads him often to belittle and subordinate the selves of others. We shall first consider the Europeans. Two categories of those were

part of the expeditions: other traders like Mackenzie, and the crews of French-Canadian canoemen, or *voyageurs*.[49]

The case of the other traders is instructive. On both of the trips another fur trader was present: on the first, a Frenchman named Le Roux, who only went the first leg of the journey; on the second, another Scotsman named Mackay, who made the entire trip. Le Roux, as we know from other sources,[50] was in fact an important trader in the North West Company, one who had already played a role in expanding to the north of Lake Athabasca – he had built a fort on Great Slave Lake in 1786 – and who was going to engage in his own mission once he left Mackenzie's party. Yet Mackenzie only very briefly mentions him, and calls him a 'clerk'.[51] As for Mackay on the second trip, he is sparingly mentioned also, and never as someone who plays a significant part, or who is on a par with the author. In the few references to him, he is criticized, given an order, or ignored. Ironically, it is only the Indians on the Bella Coola River who seem to recognize the social parity between the two traders, since the narrative reports that both were treated to a whole salmon on one occasion, while the rest of the crew was given smaller portions.[52]

The crew of French Canadians is of course considered as subordinate and inferior by Mackenzie, who, while paying homage to their physical prowess, sees this mainly as a tool for the accomplishment of his aims. He consistently drives his crew very hard, calculating the limit beyond which he cannot go without breaking them. When they complain of the pace, or consider that it would be madness to go on, Mackenzie cannily responds by in some cases listening, soothing or giving temporary respite, while in others ordering, rebuking, ridiculing, etc., depending on the technique that most promises to get them to perform as he wants them to. Mackenzie seems to have been charismatic enough to command respect for much of the trip, but in some passages the distrust and resentment of the crew is alluded to in different ways. In one instance, when Mackenzie directs them to set out over a threatening set of rapids (in other ones encountered earlier, they had narrowly escaped disaster), saying that he will walk beside the river so as to lighten the canoe, they refuse unless he comes on board as well.[53]

Another later incident particularly well illustrates Mackenzie's calculating, tactical approach to dealing with his men. Mackenzie has heard rumblings of discontent, and has understood that the men don't wish to continue. So, as they are grudgingly preparing a canoe for departure, he singles out one of the crew, who

> though a good man, was remarkable for the tardiness of his operations ... I therefore took this opportunity of unfolding my sentiments to him, and thereby discovering to all around me the real state of my mind, and the resolutions I had formed for my future conduct. After reproaching him for his general inactivity, but particularly on the present occasion ... I mentioned the apparent want of economy, both of himself and his companions, in the article of provisions. I informed him that I was not

> altogether a stranger to their late conversations ... I concluded, however, by assuring them, that whatever plan they had meditated to pursue, it was my fixed and unalterable determination to proceed ... The man was very much mortified at my addressing this remonstrance particularly to him; and replied that he did not deserve my displeasure more than the rest of them. My object being answered, the conversation dropped, and the work went on.[54]

In this passage Mackenzie displays for the reader the managerial acumen with which he has defused the threat of insubordination, by making a breach in the men through the focus on one alone.

In the narrative we are thus given some revealing glimpses of the master–servant dynamic as it worked itself out over these extraordinarily arduous voyages. A master–servant – or employer–employee – relation it certainly was, and apparently remained to the end, in spite of the extreme experiences shared – experiences of a kind that in many cases create strong ties. Mackenzie never reports fraternizing amicably with his *voyageurs* during the journeys, and he maintained no further contact with any of them after the journeys were completed.[55]

In his dealings with the Indians, as they are delineated in the text, Mackenzie is equally at pains to exercise control and assert superiority, to make the natives submit to the imperatives of his expedition, and when the occasion arises also to assure that they will carry out their functions properly in projected future fur trading. As with his crew, though, and to a much larger degree, Mackenzie encounters from the natives different forms of resistance to these impositions.

The Indians accompanying him on the trips as hunters and interpreters are continually ordered about, pressured to perform faster and do more, and they clearly find the regimen prescribed for them harder to accept than the *voyageurs* generally do theirs.[56] That they complain of fatigue, and often wish to turn back or leave the expeditions, are obvious indicators of a total disinterest in Mackenzie's goals, since when their own objectives were at stake it is well known that Indians were indefatigable. Even the chief – familiarly called the 'English Chief'[57] – who is engaged to accompany the first trip and who has had considerable previous experience collaborating with whites, grumbles, resists complying, and threatens to leave on several occasions. It is noteworthy that Mackenzie makes no attempt to befriend this man, who as an indigenous leader, and one who has been willing to work with whites, might have invited a closer, more collaborative relationship. Instead, Mackenzie treats him as an inferior, who can be dictated to. When, for instance, the Indians led by the English Chief do not immediately respond to Mackenzie's command to pursue a group of natives who have fled, Mackenzie reprimands the chief as he might a subordinate director:

> I rebuked the English Chief with some severity for his conduct, and immediately ordered him, his young men, and my own people, to go in search of the fugitives ... The English Chief was very much displeased at my reproaches, and expressed himself

> to me in person to that effect. This was the very opportunity which I wanted, to make him acquainted with my dissatisfaction for some time past. I stated to him that I had come a great way, and at a very considerable expense, without having completed the object of my wishes, and that I suspected he had concealed from me a principal part of what the natives had told him respecting the country, lest he should be obliged to follow me ... These suggestions irritated him in a very high degree, and he accused me of speaking ill words to him ... His harangue was succeeded by a loud and bitter lamentation; and his relations assisted the vociferations of his grief ... [A]s I could not well do without them, I was at length obliged to sooth it, and induce the chief to change his resolution, which he did, but with great apparent reluctance.[58]

Here, as with his French crew, Mackenzie tactically adjusts his approach to obtain the performance he wishes from the Indians he considers to have engaged, or contracted, for the trip, in this case through the intermediary of their chief.

Other Indians are temporarily brought into the travelling parties, to serve as guides to the area as far forward on the itinerary as their knowledge of the terrain warrants. These also are almost always highly reluctant to join the explorers, sometimes changing their minds and wishing to withdraw even before the expedition gets underway towards the next destination. In many cases they are simply compelled by Mackenzie to come on board, and later to remain with the party if they appear to want to leave. They are for all practical purposes prisoners, and Mackenzie – personally, because the others seem less enthusiastic about keeping guides against their will – is obliged continually to watch them. In one of the rare passages with a hint of humour, Mackenzie recounts how the only method he finds to keep one such guide from escaping during the night is to share his bed. The strategy works, but the odour of fish-oil and red earth from the man's hair and paint keeps Mackenzie awake until the next morning.[59]

'The Superiority of White People'

As for the native tribes that are encountered along Mackenzie's route, they are approached principally with an eye to what they can do for the expeditions (mainly information, directions and food). In some cases, though, as already mentioned, Mackenzie attempts to create a new trade link, or to put an old one back on track. In the latter instances – which occur in the early phases of the trips, before the party has entered hitherto unknown territories – Mackenzie sometimes 'lectures' the Indians, like a father to children. In one place not far out on the second trip, Mackenzie rebukes a tribe's recent 'misconduct' in the trade, informing them that they will be treated well only if they 'deserve it'. Otherwise, he would be 'equally severe if they failed in those returns which [he] had a right to expect from them'.[60]

In trying to obtain the aid of tribes further out on the journeys, Mackenzie generally must adopt a more conciliatory tone, since his small group is isolated

in uncontrolled Indian territory. He sometimes holds out the promise of the benefits of future trade (in particular the lure of guns and ammunition), but he also uses the usual tool of gifts – many kinds of European products, but importantly including rum.[61] This item is made use of despite the fact that the author has shown in the fur trade essay that he is aware of the devastating effects of alcohol on native populations.

Mackenzie is also careful regularly to demonstrate his power as a white European. To do so he employs several means: firing of guns to impress natives who have had little or no contact with whites, but also proclamation and dramatization of the power of European knowledge. At one point a native asks why Mackenzie is seeking information, when whites claim to know everything. Mackenzie answers that indeed they do know everything in general; the only help Indians can give them is with local details. 'Thus', he concludes, 'I fortunately preserved the impression in their minds, of the superiority of white people over themselves'.[62]

Another form of knowledge-as-power that Mackenzie wields is medical, but here the results might appear comical to the modern reader. Being far from well versed in European medical science, when several times he wishes to impress the natives by making a cure, he always uses 'Turlington's balsam', a well-known eighteenth-century 'patent' medicine claiming multifarious curative powers. Unsurprisingly, a patient who did not seem very sick in the first place gets better, and one that was gravely ill dies.[63]

All of these techniques are brought to bear – and are duly highlighted in the text for the reader – as devices serving in the effort to reach Mackenzie's all-absorbing goal. The Indians – like the others, but most crucially of all – are instrumentalized in multiple ways in an endeavour that is commercial at its heart. But one further dimension of Mackenzie's relations with Indians should also be mentioned, as repeatedly manifesting his trader's temperament over the course of the journeys. For he encounters in the Indian groups met along the way a mentality entirely foreign to his in regard to property and exchange. Their communal and gift-giving culture clashes with his own thoroughly mercantile one. Although Mackenzie too gives gifts, he does so to achieve specific purposes and they can be seen as a kind of payment for which he expects a return. Indeed, often in the text the concept of 'honest payment' recurs. Mackenzie is happily surprised in the few cases when a native seems to be respecting the notion of private ownership, and he insists on paying himself for objects taken from Indians, even when no payment is asked for. In this sense, throughout the voyages cultural misunderstanding is rife.[64]

Several passages highlight this dissonance between value systems. On the first voyage, Mackenzie reports an instance in which the Indians of his party, coming upon some native lodges, 'found several articles which they proposed to take; I therefore gave beads and awls to be left as the purchase of them; but this

act of justice they were not able to comprehend, as the people themselves were not present'.[65] Mackenzie considers that what he terms the 'justice' of payment should be applied, and that regardless of circumstances, whereas presumably for the Indians giving something 'in return' would only make sense in the context of a face-to-face ceremonial of gift exchange. Another illustration occurs early on the second expedition, while the explorer's party is wintering on the Peace River:

> There was a lodge of Indians here, who were absolutely starving with cold and hunger. They had lately lost a near relation, and had according to custom, thrown away every thing belonging to them, ... in order, as I presume, to get rid of every thing that may bring the deceased to their remembrance. They also destroy every thing belonging to any deceased person, except what they consign to the grave ... We had some difficulty to make them comprehend that the debts of a man who dies should be discharged, if he left any furs behind him.[66]

Although he does not directly say so, it is evident that Mackenzie wonders at these Indians' behaviour, so completely at odds with their self-interest, that is, with the promotion of their material prosperity. What is explicitly articulated, though, is his conviction that the commercial concept of 'debt' should override any traditional customs based on honouring the dead.

The misfit between Mackenzie's set of values and that of the Indians is also illustrated in the 'ethnological' remarks made in the course of the narration as well as in a long section included within the fur trade essay. As Parker Duchemin notices in his perceptive, exhaustive analysis of the treatment of Indians in *Voyages*, its author almost exclusively concentrates on the material culture of the various indigenous populations he came into contact with, showing virtually no interest in their spiritual life, which of course is essential to understanding them. Although clearly absorbed by some of their primitive techniques, Mackenzie ultimately judges them inferior; since spiritual wealth is ignored, this view leaves the Indians leading 'narrowly limited' lives, providing ideological justification for the European 'commercial agenda' in the 'New World'.[67]

Blindness to their spirituality could also produce drastic misreadings of the natives encountered, and probable outrage to them. Mackenzie relates one incident on the second trip in which he is convinced he has acted for the best, but has in all likelihood caused major offence. A group of Indians met earlier have decamped, leaving behind some belongings:

> On my return, I found my people indulging their curiosity in examining the bags and baskets which the natives had left behind them. Some of them contained their fishing tackle ... others of a smaller size were filled with a red earth, with which they paint themselves. In several of the bags there were also sundry articles of which I did not know the use. I prevented my men from taking any of them; and for a few articles of mere curiosity, which I took myself, I left such things in exchange as would be much more useful to their owners.[68]

These articles, which Mackenzie did not know the use of and took out of 'mere curiosity', were almost surely objects of religious significance and ritual usage for the Indians from which they were taken, and for whom 'more useful' objects would be no replacement.

Nature, Art, Commerce

A final angle from which we can observe Mackenzie's mental make-up involves his relation to the natural environment through which he passes on the trips, as well as that which has been his habitat as a fur trader since leaving his clerical position in Montreal and coming west. Both are areas peopled sparsely (in European terms) by Indian tribes whose imprint on the land is light – mainly forests that are the domain of a myriad of wild animals, an environment defined as 'wilderness' by Europeans. Towards this natural setting the author feels on the whole either indifferently or negatively. While on his explorations, natural phenomena are for the most part experienced as obstacles (precipitous mountains, dangerous rapids, etc.) or sources of discomfort (insects in particular). Animals mentioned that are not pests are generally seen simply as sources of food. In one exceptional passage where the author pauses at more length in the narrative to comment on animal life, it is unsurprisingly the beaver that is singled out (the expedition has just passed through an area with a higher concentration of these animals). Here the treatment is positive, but precisely because the beaver seems to exemplify a quality especially prized by the trader: industry. The author exclaims with admiration that 'the time which these wonderful creatures allot for their labours, whether in erecting their curious habitations, or providing food, is the whole of the interval between the setting and the rising sun'.[69] The beaver has value, then, both as the raw material of trade and as an incarnation of a cardinal virtue of traders.

As for the description of landscape, it is usually presented through a technical or scientific framing: indications of numbers of miles between one point and another, readings of points on the compass and locations of longitude and latitude. Very rarely the author shows himself to have been impressed by the beauty of a scene, but the descriptions that follow are often wooden and conventional. In one instance the attempt is cut short with the avowal that 'no expressions of mind are qualified to describe' those scenes.[70] In fact, Mackenzie seems to have been generally indifferent to scenes of wild nature, and the few admiring sketches of them were most likely the result of his ghostwriter's embellishments. One such description, which occurs in the fur trade essay, has been analysed by I. S. Maclaren as incorporating Mackenzie's commercial vision as a kind of subtext. This passage, clearly rewritten by the ghostwriter, portrays, in terms largely borrowed from the 'Picturesque' genre, the prospect of the watershed between the Hudson Bay and Arctic drainage basins, at the end of a long portage. Maclaren's

analysis convincingly suggests that the rewriting of the scene translates Mackenzie's thoroughly mercantile perception of it into artistic prose, thus subliminally 'selling', as it were, Mackenzie's commercial projects for future development.[71]

After his return to Lake Athabasca from the second trip, Mackenzie left as soon as he could for Montreal. There, in the urban environment that he preferred to the wilds, he could devote himself to the immediate pursuit of business on the one hand, and on the other the campaign to promote a grand project that in his eyes held a far greater business potential in the future. For a time – the time of his two voyages – Mackenzie's commercial aims, both short and long term, had coincided with the historical search for the Northwest Passage. From then on, though, they diverged. The search for the Passage entered a new phase, and passed into other hands.

9 ILLUSION, (SELF-)DELUSION: JEFFERSON'S 'CORPS OF DISCOVERY' AND THE ELUSIVE NORTHWEST PASSAGE (1804–6)

Gérard Hugues

Shortly after the purchase from France of the lands situated west of the Mississippi River (1803), President Jefferson chose Captain Meriwether Lewis as the leader of a 'Corps of Discovery' to explore the new and as yet uncharted northwest territories, describe the landscape, study the plants and animal life, establish diplomatic relations with the Indian tribes and – most importantly – find a direct waterway to the Pacific Ocean to facilitate expansion, trade and commerce. The prevailing belief among the promoters of the expedition within the Jefferson administration was that the Missouri and Oregan (or Columbia) rivers did necessarily 'interconnect' somewhere in the Rocky Mountains, providing an easy and continuous water route across the mountains to the western sea and the Orient.

Lewis was an experienced Army officer who had selected as his co-captain another Army officer, William Clark. From 14 May 1804 to 23 September 1806, from Saint Louis to the Pacific Ocean and back, the Corps of Discovery travelled nearly 8,000 miles. From a purely rational perspective and considering the net results of the enterprise as originally planned and prepared, the voyage was a failure: the message brought back to Jefferson by his special envoy into the wilderness was that there was no easy route from the headwaters of the Missouri to the Pacific basin. The famous interconnection simply did not exist except in the realm of illusion and mythic construction. When in April 1805 the Corps of Discovery left Fort Mandan, the wintering site that the party had chosen in October 1804 until they could resume their up-river journey, Lewis did not of course anticipate this disappointing outcome. On the contrary he let his imagination roam free and open before his eyes the promise of a link between the two oceans. This illusion – and later self-delusion – was no doubt a major incentive to secure the progress of the expedition.

Next to Lewis and Clark, five men kept journals: sergeants Charles Floyd, John Ordway and Patrick Gass, and privates Joseph Whitehouse and John Frazer. The latter's journal was lost and never published. The original manuscript of Pat-

rick Gass's journal was also lost, but in 1807 his notes became the first published account of the voyage of discovery. Of the six existing accounts, only three – those of William Clark, John Ordway and Patrick Gass – are continuous narratives of the whole journey. No journal of Lewis's has been located for the first leg of the expedition (from Saint Louis to the winter camp among the Mandan Indians). Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor is believed to have kept a journal, but if he did keep one, it remains unaccounted for to this day.[1] This chapter will exclusively refer to Clark's and Lewis's entries, as edited by Bernard de Voto in 1953, forming a continuous and relatively reliable narrative of the expedition of discovery.

This chapter's purpose is to show how Lewis used his journal to proclaim the primacy of mind over facts. I argue that the paradoxical success of the disappointing expedition rested on Jefferson's and Lewis's capacity for self-delusion and illusory construction. The whole venture had been predicated on a false postulate derived from scanty or distorted scientific data: the best existing maps suggested that a waterway was bound to provide an access to the northwestern territories beyond the mountains, a geographical representation of the new territories that did not in fact correspond to any reality, but one in which Jefferson put all his faith, inducing Lewis in turn to read into the maps of the continent a layout constantly belied by his arduous progress. Jefferson's vision of things was also constrained by his reading of Alexander Mackenzie's journal, which both prompted him to take action and functioned as a further source of confusion or misinterpretation. This capacity and propensity for self-delusion, I finally argue, accounts for much of Lewis's ambiguous attitude to the Shoshone Indians.

Giving a Colouring to the Events

Before they had reached Fort Mandan – in the region of present-day Bismark (North Dakota) – the party of fifty-five men, mostly military, had sailed upstream along the Missouri on board a fairly comfortable keelboat accompanied by two dugout canoes, and had discovered the grandiose scenery of the untouched American West. Before the coming of winter the keelboat had been sent back downstream with twenty men on board, carrying back to Jefferson the first animal and vegetable specimens encountered in the newly discovered territories. With spring coming round, the canoes had been freed from the grip of ice and the party of thirty-three men, military as well as civilians, had readied themselves for the final onslaught that should open the way to 'the other sea'. The task was immense for the Corps of Discovery and its two leaders, all the more formidable as they were about to plunge deep into a *terra incognita*. But all were exhilarated at the thought of penetrating what Lewis described as 'a country at least two thousand miles in width, on which the foot of a civilized man had never trodden', before he immediately added that 'the good or evil it had in store for us was for experiment yet to determine'.[2] Despite the impending dan-

gers and predictable plight expecting the party, the general mood was optimistic and Captain Lewis was inhabited by the wild hope of discovering the famous Northwest Passage, opening the way to the rich markets of the Far East.

On 7 April 1805, while pondering the extent of the task to be accomplished, Lewis entered in his logbook a description of his expeditionary corps that paradoxically both stressed its frail logistic basis and celebrated the mythic potentialities of the undertaking. The voyage would be accomplished on board 'six small canoes, and two large perogues [*sic*]', but the captain saw the party as the proud continuation of a noble lineage:

> This little fleet altho' not quite so rispectable [*sic*] as those of Columbus or Capt Cook, were still viewed by us with as much pleasure as those deservedly famed adventurers ever beheld theirs.[3]

Though conscious that his canoes and pirogues were no match to Columbus's *Santa Maria* or Cook's *Endeavour*, Lewis was determined to add his own name to the list of his prestigious predecessors. Journal-writing and fireside-editing would make up for the obvious disproportion in the material means invested in the venture and endow the US Army officer with a status as respectable as that of the great discoverers of new worlds. Beyond Fort Mandan lay the vast unknown, and Lewis underlined the epic character of his mission: the President of the United States, in the name of the American people, had empowered him with the task of discovering the famous waterway to the West in an enterprise that had in the past baffled so many gallant men. The captain knew he was at a crossroads, and on that evening of 7 April 1805 he withdrew from the rest of the party to take the measure of his immense responsibility and ponder the forthcoming hardships.

He was now in command of military personnel, along with a few civilians recruited for their hunting skills (Drouillard) or their experience as rivermen (Cruzatte and Labiche), all of them French-speaking roguish trappers who would yet play a major role in the success of the expedition.[4] Lewis could also count on Sacagawea – the Indian wife of Toussaint Charbonneau, an experienced frontiersman[5] – who would serve as a guide to the Corps when it reached the Shoshone territory and would lead the way across the Rockies to the headwaters of the Columbia. Her presence among them would also guarantee the peaceful progress of the Corps, as she would facilitate contact with the native tribes and be the living symbol of Jefferson's desire to welcome his Indian 'sons' into the 'Temple of Liberty' he intended to build in the midst of the wilderness. For the president's intentions were noble and generous, away from the hostile stance often diagnosed in the reading of the Indian–white relations, even if the overall policy of the American government and the purpose of the expedition were ultimately to dispossess the natives of their ancestral lands and secure the unabridged sovereignty of the federal government over the territories purchased from the French.

On that day of April, time was suspended and Lewis's entry bears the stamp of his curious fascination for an action that he both fears and desires. This vacillation between two antagonistic drives discloses in fact the very fabric of Lewis's journal as well as the mainspring of his psychic behaviour: the real world is partially obliterated and the forthcoming hardships are denied or downplayed. The sense of a superior mission fosters a frame of mind whereby everything becomes possible, and self-delusion serves to construct the idea that the task will be an easy one after all. The narrator's viewpoint would henceforth prevail over brute facts, and reality would dissolve before the projected image wielded by the author of the *Journal*. A personal 'colouring' would thus be instilled into Lewis's narrative that would definitely alter the plain actuality of the unfolding events:

> the state of mind in which we are, generally gives the colouring to events, when the imagination is suffered to wander into futurity, the picture which now presented itself to me was a most pleasing one. enterta[in]ing as I do, the most confident hope of succeeding in a voyage which had formed a da[r]ling project of mine for the last ten years.[6]

Lewis hereby postulated the primacy of the mind over the fact, of the fantasm over the object. The success of his expedition rested on such a shaky foundation, a by-product of Lewis's capacity and propensity for self-delusion and illusory construction.

A Cartographic Illusion

The ultimate goal of the expedition was well encapsulated in the famous outcry of its leaders 'Ocean in view!', heard when the party reached the mouth of the Columbia on 7 November 1805.[7] But Jefferson and the promoters of the expedition had relied on an illusory disposition of the land, taking it for granted that the American continent would naturally provide an easy access to the sea, although no dependable geographic sources were available at the time to support this optimistic outlook.

Prominent among the various pre-existing theories of the American continent were those of Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet, two explorers from 'New France', who had discovered the Missouri river in 1673 and immediately conjectured that if the river was followed up to its headwaters, an interconnection was bound to exist between the Missouri flowing westward and some unknown river that would most certainly empty itself into the Pacific Ocean.[8] The two French adventurers had thus initiated the cartographic illusion that would linger on in the minds of all those attempting to open the 'Passage to India' – as the Northwest Passage was also called – through the huge continent. Marquette's map was fairly accurate when showing the course of the Mississippi but did not show much of the course of the Missouri, as the territory was still uncharted and no

one had ever ventured beyond the point where the Missouri branches off from the Mississippi. More than a century later, some progress had been made in the science of cartography but the original assumption was not seriously challenged, and the success of American trade and the future of American expansionism were still predicated on Jolliet's and Marquette's representation of the Missouri.

The task of providing reliable cartographic material to the leader of the expedition became the responsibility of its promoter, President Thomas Jefferson, assisted by Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin. Jefferson had publicly expressed his interest for the West and had gathered considerable material during his stay in Europe.[9] While in France he had purchased almost everything he could lay his hands on relating to the trans-Missouri region, so much so that his personal library in Monticello – Jefferson's home in Virginia – brimmed with innumerable volumes of maps, correspondence and narratives on the subject. But despite all his efforts, the trans-Missouri region remained a riddle, or at best a conjecture awaiting confirmation or correction of pre-arranged conceptions.

Jefferson and Gallatin could also fall back on the latest published maps. The water route up to the Mandan tribe's camp had been charted on a recent map drawn in 1803 by Andrew Ellicott, one of the best surveyors of his time.[10] But the journey beyond Fort Mandan would be far more problematic due to the scarcity of sources. Ellicott's maps were limited in scope and provided little information beyond the Missouri. Still, Jefferson and Gallatin were confident that the most recent maps, particularly those of Aaron Arrowsmith – an Englishman – could be trusted as they had been authored by the most prestigious cartographer of his time. Arrowsmith had published two maps that provided insight into the layout of the western lands. The 1795 map did not show the Missouri clearly flowing westward from a unique range of mountains bearing the name of Stony Mountains, and left a blank beyond the mountains to the Pacific basin, but in 1802 knowledge of the western territory had leapt forward, and it seemed a water system originating in the Rocky (Stony) Mountains gave an obvious access to the range. Across them, the map identified a unique stream flowing eastward to a place called Point Vancouver where it debouched into the river Oregan.

Earlier maps had for many years kept alive the idea of a big lake located somewhere along the watershed of the Rocky Mountains, which would serve as an interconnection between the Missouri and the mythic river of the West that no civilized man had ever seen. Jefferson fully trusted the layout of the region as drawn by Arrowsmith, and if indeed the existence of a lake had to be abandoned, at least the many tributaries of the Missouri were sure to provide an access to the western territory beyond the mountains. That fundamental illusion, alleged to be resting on solid scientific ground, resurfaced in the president's 'Instructions to Captain Lewis' of June 1803 and would 'color' his own vision of the territory to be traversed:

> The object of your mission is to explore the Missouri river and such principal stream of it, as by it's course & communication with the water of the Pacific ocean may offer the most direct and practicable water communication across the continent for the purposes of commerce.[11]

Next to Arrowsmith's knowledgeable mapping expertise, Jefferson also had at his disposal George Vancouver's narrative of his exploration of the coast of northwest America, which his brother John had completed in 1798.[12] Vancouver had explored the mouth of the Oregan/Columbia and had even sent one of his lieutenants upstream for several miles. The man had reported that the river at this point was large and perfectly navigable.[13] By putting together these two clues, Jefferson could form the self-evident truth that the Northwest Passage was somewhere to be found in the vicinity of the headwaters of the Missouri. This delusion was instilled into Lewis's mind on the assumption that several options would present themselves to the Corps of Discovery and that he would eventually have to choose the most convenient. This absolute certainty conveyed by Jefferson's letter of instructions would have a dramatic effect on the route followed by the expedition. As the journey westward brought the inescapable evidence that no easy portage existed from the source of the Missouri to the Pacific basin, on their return journey the two captains decided to follow two separate routes, Lewis choosing the northern unexplored option in the hope of confirming Jefferson's conjecture.

He ventured into the lands watered by the Maria and Cut Bank Creek, with the growing concern that the route to the Pacific would always elude him. His entry of 4 July 1806 expressed his doubts, even if the looming peril of a failure did not suffice to thwart his reckless progress. As the party of Indians who had accompanied him chose to return along the Yellowstone River located to the south, Lewis confided that this '... furnished evidence that there is not so near or so good a rout [*sic*] to the plains of Columbia by land along that river as that which we came'.[14] Undaunted by this growing conviction that he was on the wrong trail and that he had endangered his men by splitting the Corps of Discovery into two sections, Lewis continued his progress. It would take two weeks of a slow and painful progression along rugged territory before he finally admitted that the Maria would not provide the entrance into the Rockies that would secure an easy passage to the Pacific. It was not before 22 July that Lewis confessed the failure of his undertaking: 'I now have lost all hope of the waters of this river ever extending to N. Latitude 50°'.[15]

Beyond the water system alleged to flow from the watershed of the Rockies, the cartographic illusion extended to the layout of the continent and the disposition of the mountain ranges. Jefferson had from a very early period subscribed to the thesis of the symmetry of the continent. As early as 1781 in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (published in 1784), he had declared his belief that the Appala-

chians towering at roughly 3,000 feet could not be surpassed, which amounted to acknowledging the exceptional character of his own 'country' as he already called it:

The Allegheney being the great ridge which divides the waters of the Atlantic from those of the Missispi [*sic*], its summit is doubtless more elevated above the ocean than any other mountain ... The mountains of the Blue Ridge, and of these the Peaks of the Otter, are thought to be of greater height, measured from their base, than any others in our country, and perhaps in North America.[16]

When sending the Corps of Discovery into the wilderness, Jefferson was convinced that its progression would not be hampered by any range of mountains of considerable altitude, so that when Lewis first beheld the snow-capped Rockies, he was somewhat baffled by 'the mountains on both sides of the river [that] are very lofty'.[17] An available map of 1784 by Peter Pond[18] clearly featured the Continental Divide along an uninterrupted range of mountains stretching from Canada down to the Mexican border, with a water drainage that left no doubt as to the interconnection between the rivers flowing westward and one called the 'Naberkistagon' emptying itself into the Pacific. The striking fact was that the general layout of the western territory almost exactly replicated the Appalachian pattern. Lewis, before he reached the foot of the Rockies, had consulted Pond's map but also Arrowsmith's, and had the most absolute faith in the theory of geographical symmetry. Jefferson had postulated that the Rockies did not culminate at a higher altitude than the Appalachians, and as such would be easily overcome by Lewis and his men. The short portage turned out to be a fastidious trek through stumbling blocks and deep snow over a distance of 364 miles. He and his men, who had hoped that they would make the return journey before the winter, were forced to overwinter at the mouth of the Columbia in a place they symbolically baptized Cape Disappointment.[19]

It may be wondered why this cartographic illusion was first promoted by Jefferson and so readily accepted and endorsed by his envoy, and why the two men so painstakingly read into the map of the continent elements that only corresponded to their own mental constructions. The reason is probably to be found in both men's belief in the ultimate destiny of the United States. When Jefferson instructed Lewis to find a convenient route to the West 'for the purpose of commerce', he certainly was not telling the whole truth as to the real finality of the expedition. Beyond commercial pursuits, Jefferson intended to challenge the European nations still active on the continent and claim the sovereignty of the United States over this huge territory. Just as Jefferson believed that the Missouri would open the Passage to India, he was confident that no human force would be likely to challenge the scouts of the New Nation, achieving the ultimate fate of a people endowed with a sacred right to conquer and domesticate those virgin lands.

From Emulation to Blindness

In 1801, Jefferson heard about the secret treaty signed in October 1800 between the French government and the Spanish authorities, whereby Spain had retroceded the whole territory of Louisiana to France. The president could rightly consider that the United States was confronted with the peril of being surrounded by the two most powerful nations of the time. Though an ardent Francophile, Jefferson could not but express the most extreme concern if Napoleon – who then presided over the destinies of France as First Consul and whose appetite for territorial expansion was well known – took the control of these extensive tracts of land, plus the port of New Orleans through which all the western trade of the United States was then passing.

Another source of worry to Jefferson and his men was Alexander Mackenzie's narrative of his 1792–3 journey to the Pacific, published in 1801 under the title *Voyages from Montreal on the River St. Laurence though the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in the Years 1789 and 1793*. The Scotsman, a fur trader for the North West Company, had left Fort Chipewyan in October 1792 and made his way along the Peace River to become the first European to cross the North American continent and reach the Pacific coast in July 1793. The exploit recorded in Mackenzie's journal stood as a major threat to the presidential ambitions concerning the northwest territories, and were at the same time an ominous sign. For 1792 was also the year Jefferson had approached Henri Michaux, a French botanist and experienced adventurer, and gathered the funds necessary to a trans-Missouri voyage under the aegis of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia.[20] Michaux had been carefully instructed to carry out a purely scientific mission whose purpose would be to gain a better knowledge of the geography of the continent, its flora and fauna. But instead of performing the tasks for which he had been selected, Michaux chose to follow the river Ohio into Kentucky and was enmeshed in a plot hatched by Citizen Genêt – at the time minister of France in the United States – to ignite an insurrection of American westerners against the Spanish authorities.[21] The plan failed dramatically and Jefferson had to disavow the clumsy Frenchman and, at least for a while, renounce any further attempt to set up an expedition to the West.

Mackenzie's journal therefore goaded the president into taking up an old project, now that he was in power and able to raise the funds necessary to its successful outcome. It was a matter of self-esteem after the personal fiasco of 1792, but it was also time the New Nation staked its claims on territories situated within a practicable sphere of influence. One sentence in particular in the opening pages of Mackenzie's account must have rung to Jefferson's ears as a formidable challenge that could not be left without response:

> by unfolding countries hitherto unexplored, and which, I presume, may now be considered as a part of the British dominions, it [the narrative] will be received as a faithful tribute to the prosperity of my country.[22]

At the time of a heated debate between Federalists and Democratic-Republicans about the proper size of the new nation and the risks inherent in overextending the territory of the republic, the apparent success of Mackenzie gave fresh arguments to Jefferson, unless it was admitted that the United States government should not extend its arm across the Mississippi. Jefferson had early dismissed the notion that the republican ideal would be jeopardized if it was not restricted to a small territory. Instead, he toyed with the idea of an Empire of Liberty that would stretch from sea to sea, and the success of a transcontinental voyage would foster new and reasonable hopes of achieving this grandiose ambition. Lewis and Clark were probably aware of the political or ideological dimension of their mission. When Mackenzie had reached the shores of the Pacific on 22 July 1793, he had carved on a stone the inscription: 'Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, the twenty second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three'.[23] Twelve years later, Clark would perform almost exactly the same ritual, except that the carving would be made on a pine tree: 'William Clark December 3rd 1805. By land from the U. States in 1804 & 1805'.[24] Clark's inscription was quite obviously meant to be read as a clear instance of symbolic reappropriation. The new nation's cultural prestige was also at stake. It was made clear that the predictable success of the American Corps of Discovery would depend largely on a long and meticulous preparation whereby the Army officers would be turned into well-trained, professional explorers, in contrast to Mackenzie's crudely pragmatic approach:

> I do not possess the science of the naturalist; and even if the qualifications of that character had been attained by me, its curious spirit would not have been gratified. I could not stop to dig into the earth over whose surface I was compelled to pass with rapid steps; nor could I turn aside to collect the plants which nature might have scattered on the way, when my thoughts were anxiously employed in making provision for the day that was passing over me.[25]

Jefferson made sure Lewis learned all the theories and practices of navigation and sent him to Philadelphia to be trained by the best astronomers and cartographers. The Lewis and Clark expedition would bring back new data about the northwest territories and would yield scientific knowledge that Mackenzie could never have anticipated.

Emulation, however, would also prove a blinding force. There was one passage in Mackenzie's journal that certainly drew Jefferson's special attention – the crossing of the Continental Divide on 12 June 1793:

> Here two streams tumble down the rocks from the right, and lose themselves in the lake which we had left (Arctic Lake); while two others fall from the opposite heights, and glide into the lake which we were approaching (Portage Lake); this being the highest point of land dividing these waters, and we are now going with the stream.[26]

Here at last was evidence that the mythic interconnection did exist. The day after this discovery, an 'alarming scene, with all its terrors and dangers'[27] nearly killed Mackenzie and his Indian guides, but Jefferson henceforward disregarded the difficulties encountered by the party as they sailed downstream. Even if the two rivers did not interlock, at least a short and easy portage would open the gate to the ocean, a certainty that the president would impart to Lewis in his letter of instructions:

> The interesting points of the portage between the heads of the Missouri & the water offering the best communication with the Pacific ocean should be fixed by observation, & the course of that water to the ocean, in the same manner as that of the Missouri.[28]

Jefferson's self-delusion was so complete that in his 'Confidential Letter to Congress' (asking for financial support to explore the West), he took it for granted that Mackenzie's route could be replicated south of the Canadian border, elaborating on the future prospects for the United States, a nation better endowed by the Creator:

> It is, however, understood, that the country on that river is inhabited by numerous tribes, who furnish great supplies of furs and peltry to the trade of another nation, carried on in a high latitude, through an infinite number of portages and lakes, shut up by ice through a long season. The commerce on that line could bear no competition with that of the Missouri, traversing a moderate climate, offering according to the best accounts, a continued navigation from its source, and possibly with a single portage, from the Western Ocean, and finding to the Atlantic a choice of channels through the Illinois or Wabash, the lakes and Hudson, through the Ohio and Susquehanna, or Potomac or James rivers, and through the Tennessee and Savannah, rivers.[29]

To the east/west geographical symmetry mentioned earlier, Jefferson would add a conjectural north/south symmetry, enabling him to construct an image of the northwest very close to that of a garden watered by innumerable and navigable rivers to carry a flourishing trade and secure the existence of generations to come.

Substituting a Fantasy World for First-Hand Knowledge

As we know, Lewis had been trained in various fields of science, and Jefferson had explicitly requested in his official instructions that he used 'instruments for ascertaining by celestial observations the geography of the country through which [he would] pass'.[30] Such data would provide all the information necessary for an accurate mapping of the trans-Missouri region. Inexplicably, though, in

August 1805 Lewis made an astounding error thinking he had reached the headwaters of the Missouri. He was immediately convinced that he was about to cross the Continental Divide and that his route would now take him along a river flowing westward. On 12 August 1805, he allowed his imagination to wander wildly, creating an imaginary world to match his ambitious project:

> at a distance of 4 miles further the road took us to the most distant fountain of the waters of the Mighty Missouri in surch [*sic*] of which we have spent so many toilsome days and wristless nights. Thus far I had accomplished one of those great objects on which my mind has been unalterably fixed for many years, judge then of the pleasure I felt in allaying my thirst with this pure and ice-cold water which issues from the base of a low mountain or hill of a gentle ascent for ½ a mile.[31]

The entry describes a pass between two summits with gentle slopes, which the party had reached after following an easy trail. Writing by the fireside that evening, Lewis indulged in his wild hopes, certain he was about to discover the famous Passage: 'I therefore did not dispair of shortly finding a passage over the mountains and of taisting the waters of the great Columbia that evening'.[32] And indeed, after crossing the pass and walking just three quarters of a mile down a slope – which he found steeper than he had expected – Lewis stopped by a 'handsome bold running Creek of cold Clear water', which he decided could only be the Columbia: 'here I first tasted the water of the great Columbia river'.[33] On that day, his journal records that Lewis looked back upon all the hardships he had been through. In order to emphasize the exceptional significance of what he had accomplished, Lewis composed an intensely visual scene, representing one of his men, Private Hugh McNeal – of whom almost nothing is known – heroically bestriding the 'Mighty Missouri', a potent symbol of the national epic that the expedition of discovery was taken to be:

> ... McNeal had exultingly stood with a foot on each side of this little rivulet and thanked his god that he had lived to bestride the mighty and heretofore deemed endless Missouri.[34]

Lewis's entry was in perfect conformity with the spirit of his time, and it was also meant to meet the expectations of the great promoter of the voyage. The leader of the Corps of Discovery remembered how highly Jefferson had written about the Missouri[35] and he also knew his first reader would be the president himself. Well aware of the mythic aura surrounding this heretofore unexplored river, Lewis wished to make the president and a whole nation share his pride at having solved one the most formidable enigmas of the day. Unfortunately what Lewis took to be the source of the Missouri was in fact a small stream flowing westward from the Lemhi Pass into the river Lemhi, not the eastbound Missouri.

Immediately after crossing the Great Divide, Lewis stressed the fact that the Lehmi Pass was surrounded by 'immense ranges of high mountains still to the West of us with their tops partially covered with snow'.[36] This should have been a clear indication that the theoretical hypothesis of the symmetry of the continent was invalid and that the party were about to enter the most perilous part of their journey. But the captain remained undaunted, and to the Indians repeatedly warning him against the dangers of the journey, he would adamantly oppose his own blind faith. Guided and supported as he was by both a superintending divine authority and the trust placed in him by the highest magistrate of the Young Nation, he could not entertain the slightest doubt as to the feasibility of his enterprise.

The day after Lewis had declared he had pierced the secret of the Passage, he was still in need of horses and desperately looking for the Shoshone tribe who were reputed to be excellent horsemen and horse-dealers. Lewis knew now that the fate of the expedition irremediably depended upon the commercial relations he would be able to establish with the natives. He did not hesitate as a consequence to threaten his interlocutors – notably Cameahwait, a Shoshone chief and Sacagawea's brother – that if they did not help the corps push forward, they would never receive anything from the white men, especially no guns or ammunition:

> I told him [Cameahwait] if they continued to think thus meanly of us that they might rely on it that no whitemen would ever come to trade with them or bring them arms or amunition and that if the bulk of his nation still entertained this opinion I still hoped that there were some among them that were not affraid to die, that were men and would go with me and convince themselves of the truth of what I had asserted.[37]

So far, the Shoshones had been particularly elusive and this had been a source of great concern to the two captains. When Lewis had seen a native on horseback on 11 August and identified him as a Shoshone, he had performed the ritual supposed to gain his trust, including rolling up his sleeve to show he was a white man and not a Blackfoot trying to entice him into a trap. Lewis had also tried to gain the Indian's confidence by referring to himself as a *tab-ba-bone*, a white man. This had all been in vain, as one of the men in the party had acted arrogantly and scared the Shoshone away. On 13 August Lewis was given another occasion to meet the Shoshones, whom he immediately tried to placate, conscious as he was that a protracted hostility of the tribe would simply force the Corps of Discovery to put an end to their journey:

> I knew that if these people left me that they would immediately disperse and secrete themselves in the mountains where it would be impossible to find them or at least in vain to pursue them and that they would spread the allarm [*sic*] to all other bands within our reach & of course we should be disappointed in obtaining horses, which would vastly retard and increase the labor of our voyage and I feared might so discourage the men as to defeat the expedition altogether.[38]

To Lewis's great relief the second attempt was successful: 'a band of warriors mounted on excellent horses'[39] came up to him and their chief Cameahwait entered the stage. The ritual of pipe-smoking and embracing each other in the Indian manner was carried out meticulously until Lewis declared himself 'tired of the national hug'.[40] Lewis and his men were the first white people these natives had ever seen and it took some time to overcome their fear and distrust, as many in the band believed that the white men were allies of the Minetarees and were dragging them into an ambush. Drouillard acted as interpreter using sign language, as Sacagawea had been left behind and was at that time travelling with a second party led by Captain Clark. Lewis, who was convinced he was now on the water drainage system of the Columbia, engaged in negotiations for the horses and sought to glean information about the rest of his journey.

The first meeting with Cameahwait should have dampened his optimism, since after telling Lewis that the river near the village emptied itself into another that was twice as large but a half day's walk away from the camp, the Shoshone chief added

> that there was but little more timber below the junction of those rivers than I saw here, and that the river was confined between inaccessable [*sic*] mountains, was very rapid and rocky insomuch that it was impossible for us to pass either by land or water down this river to the great lake where the white men lived as he had been informed.[41]

The near absence of timber downstream implied that the men would never be able to build canoes and that in any case, given the nature of the river, they would be compelled to choose an overland route. The evidence provided by Cameahwait did not however deter Lewis, whose faith in the existence of an interconnection between two big navigable rivers remained unshattered. He admitted that this was most 'unwelcome' news but persisted in refusing to give credibility to Indian knowledge, choosing rather to question the chief's sincerity: 'this was unwelcome information but I still hoped that this account had been exaggerated with a view to detain us among them'.[42] Interaction with the natives could be contemplated as long as the factual evidence they provided did not contradict the fantasy world Lewis had created, preferring to trust the authority of bookish knowledge and erroneous judgement rather than the authority of first-hand experience or testimony.

The material evidence gathered as the Corps of Discovery progressed into the wilderness did not suffice to invalidate the initial theory of a Northwest Passage that the Lewis and Clark expedition had been supposed to test. The leaders, promoters and participants of the voyage would systematically downplay their disillusion to justify the nation's ideology of conquest. It was simply acknowledged that the conquest of the new territories would be delayed since the route to the West would be slower and far less easy than had been anticipated and

hoped. But the conquest of the continent by the American people, whose president had declared that they were 'the chosen people of God',[43] became a sacred right inscribed in the genetic make-up of the new nation. The Americans would be endowed with the mission of conquering and taming these vast tracts of land as well as the indigenous people whose main fault was not to make a proper use of the soil. The journey into the wilderness was largely a journey into a formidable error – a creative one in terms of national ideology and mythology.

The Indian tribes were in Jefferson's eyes the by-product of an exceptional land, which could but yield exceptional people since, as Crèvecoeur had stated, 'Men are like plants',[44] the product of their environment. The natives would therefore paradoxically profit by the advance of white settlers into the western country. The environmental thesis ultimately served the rationale of conquest, which in turn furthered the interests of the expansionists ending up with the dispossession and near disappearance of the native populations. Lewis, like his mentor, trusted that the American natives, provided they were given access to the manners of the civilized people, would eventually attain a degree of development which would open for them the doors of the Temple of Liberty. Time was on the side of the white Americans. And this after all was the idea that both Jefferson's and Lewis's texts finally managed to impose on the uncharted northwest territories. Journal-writing in particular was an integral part of the process of conquest and colonization. Obviously enough, the various forms of stock-taking envisaged by Jefferson – identifying, naming, listing, measuring, surveying, mapping, etc. – implied a process of translation of the unknown into the known. But perhaps more importantly, the unknown land – in order to acquire significance – had to be forced into the temporality of a grand design that no factual obstacle could ultimately derail: narrativization was stronger than reality; illusion and self-delusion could indeed move mountains.

NOTES

Lemercier-Goddard and Regard, 'Introduction: The Northwest Passage and the Imperial Project: History, Ideology, Myth'

1. McClure handed his papers over to his fellow officer Sherard Osborn, who edited them as *The Discovery of the North-West Passage* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1856).
2. See K. McGoogan, *Fatal Passage: The Story of John Rae, the Arctic Hero Time Forgot* (Toronto: Harper Flamingo, 2001).
3. See R. Willes, 'Certain Other Reasons or Arguments to Prove a Passage by the Northwest' (1577), in R. Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation Made by Sea or Over-land to the Remote and Farthest Distant Quarters of the Earth at Any Time Within the Compasse of these 1600 Yeeres*, 12 vols (1589; Glasgow: J. MacLehose and Sons, 1903–5), vol. 7, pp. 191–203, on p. 197.
4. J. Barrow, *A Chronological History of Voyages into the Arctic Regions* (London: John Murray, 1818), p. 364. See G. Williams, *Arctic Labyrinth: The Quest for the Northwest Passage* (London and New York: Allen Lane, 2009), p. 167.
5. McGoogan, *Fatal Passage*, p. 267.
6. See D. Armitage and M. J. Braddick (eds), *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 11–29.
7. See M. L. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 4–8.
8. G. Best, *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie for the Finding of a Passage to Cathaya by the North-West, under the Conduct of Martin Frobisher Generall* (London: Henry Bynnyman, 1578), reprinted in R. Collinson (ed.), *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867, rev. edn 1963), p. 56.
9. E. Hayes, 'A Report of the Voyage and Successe Thereof, Attempted in the Yeere of our Lord, 1583. By Sir Humfrey Gilbert Knight', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 8, pp. 34–77, on p. 77.
10. Hayes, 'Report', p. 72.
11. Ibid., p. 66. See also Best's similar descriptions of the roaring tides in the 'Mistaken Strait' in *True Discourse*, p. 240.
12. See D. B. Quinn, 'Sir Thomas Smith (1513–1577) and the Beginnings of the English Colonial Theory', *Proceedings from the American Philosophical Society*, 89 (1945), pp. 543–60, on p. 545.
13. Hayes, 'Report', p. 76.
14. Best, *True Discourse*, p. 287.

15. Ibid., p. 264; See D. Settle, *A True Reporte of the Laste Voyage into the West and Northwest Regions* (London, 1577), in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 211–30, on p. 213.
16. See N. Denzin, *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture* (London: Sage, 2003), p. 9.
17. Hayes, 'Report', p. 67.
18. On Dee's *Limits of the British Empire* written in 1577–8, see K. MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 53–61.
19. Best, *True Discourse*, p. 34.
20. Willes, 'Certain Other Reasons', p. 200. The *Historie* was Willes's edition of Richard Eden's translation of Peter Martyr's *Decades of the New World* (1555), a work which had initiated the genre of English discovery travel writing.
21. Willes, 'Certain Other Reasons', p. 194.
22. Best, *True Discourse*, p. 42.
23. See N. Canny (ed.), *The Origins of Empire: British Overseas Enterprise*, The Oxford History of the British Empire, vol. 1 (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998–9), p. xi.
24. Hayes, 'Report', p. 53.
25. D. Armitage, 'The Elizabethan Idea of Empire', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 14 (2004), pp. 269–77, on p. 276.
26. P. Pope, *Fish into Wine: The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), p. 56.
27. Best, *True Discourse*, p. 19.
28. Ibid., p. 288.
29. See Armitage, 'Idea of Empire', p. 277.
30. Willes, 'Certain Other Reasons', p. 192.
31. See A. Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 25.
32. Hayes, 'Report', p. 60.
33. Best, *True Discourse*, p. 20.
34. Ibid., p. 265.
35. Hayes, 'Report', p. 36.
36. M. C. Fuller, *Remembering the Early Modern Voyage: English Narratives in the Age of European Expansion* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 15.
37. For the importance of Newfoundland in the development of a consumer society, see P. E. Pope, *Fish into Wine: The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), p. 350.
38. B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), pp. 39–40.
39. J. E. Millais, *The Northwest Passage*, 1874, oil on canvas, 2155 x 2620 x 145 mm, Tate Gallery, London.
40. See J. Rosenfeld and A. Smith, *Millais* (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), p. 160.
41. Best, *True Discourse*, pp. 34–5.
42. Ibid., p. 282; see also Hayes, 'Report', p. 58.
43. See, for instance, W. Scoresby, Jr, *An Account of the Arctic Regions with a History and Description of the Northern Whale-Fishery*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1820).

44. See C. Martin, 'William Scoresby, Jr. (1789–1857) and the Open Polar Sea – Myth and Reality', *Arctic*, 41:1 (March 1988), pp. 39–47.
45. Hayes, 'Report', p. 65, p. 70; Best, *True Discourse*, p. 134; Settle, *True Reporte*, p. 105.
46. C. C. Loomis, 'Arctic and Orphic', *London Review of Books*, 8:1 (1986), pp. 12–13, on p. 12.
47. C. Lévi-Strauss, 'The Structural Study of Myth', in *Structural Anthropology* (1958), trans. C. Jacobson and B. G. Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 206–31, on p. 229.

1 Fuller, 'Arctics of Empire: The North in *Principal Navigations* (1598–1600)'

1. I would like to thank my colleague Susan Solomon, an atmospheric chemist and climate scientist in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Science, for kindly agreeing to read this essay and provide the perspective of a scientist with first-hand experience of the Antarctic. Any errors of fact remain my own.
2. Hakluyt printed two distinct and different editions of his collection: *Principall Navigations* (London, 1589) in one volume (distinguished by the spelling 'Principall'), and *Principal Navigations* (London, 1598–1600) in three volumes. Unless otherwise noted, all references will be to the modern reprint of the latter, *Principal Navigations*, 12 vols (Glasgow: J. MacLehose and Sons, 1903–05).
3. R. Hakluyt, 'A Preface to the Reader', *Principal Navigations*, vol. 1, p. xl.
4. T. E. Armstrong, 'The Arctic', in D. Quinn (ed.), *The Hakluyt Handbook*, 2 vols (London: Hakluyt Society, 1974), vol. 1, pp. 254–60, on pp. 254–5.
5. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 8, p. 36.
6. R. Thorne, 'A Declaration of the Indies', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 2, pp. 159–63, on p. 165.
7. R. Recorde, *The Castle of Knowledge* (London, 1556), p. 213; Recorde, *The Whetstone of Witte* (London, 1557), p. A3r; H. Gilbert, *Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataia* (London, 1576), reprinted as 'A Discourse Written by Sir Humphrey Gilbert', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 158–203, on pp. 163, 164. All citations are to the version printed by Hakluyt.
8. See especially E. G. R. Taylor, *Tudor Geography, 1485–1583* (London: Methuen, 1930); K. MacMillan (ed.) with J. Abeles, *John Dee: The Limits of the British Empire* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2004); W. H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995).
9. Dee used such Arctic sources in, for instance, his manuscript treatise *Brytanici Imperii Limites* ('Limits of the British Empire'), BL Additional MS 59681. For Dee's use of Geoffrey, see MacMillan, *Limits*, p. 16; for the English friar, see MacMillan, *Limits*, p. 21–2 and E. G. R. Taylor, 'A Letter Dated 1577 from Mercator to John Dee', *Imago Mundi*, 13 (1956), pp. 56–68.
10. For Dee and the Zenii, see MacMillan, *Limits*, pp. 10–11. The original appeared as N. Zeno, *Dello Scoprimento dell'isole Frislanda, Eslanda, Engrouelanda, Estotilanda, & Icaria...* (Venice, 1557). Hakluyt translated from a version in Giovanni Baptista Ramusio, *Navigationi et viaggi* (Venice, 1574), vol. 2, ff.225f–37v (see Quinn, *Handbook*, vol. 2, p. 339).

11. 'The Voyage of M. Nicolas Zeno and M. Anthony his Brother, to the Yles of Frisland, Island, Engronland, Estotiland, Drogeo, and Icaria', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 445–63, on pp. 456 (libraries), 451 (flowers and fruits); MacMillan, *Limits*, p. 52 (monuments).
12. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations* (London, 1589), pp. *2r. For clarity, the first edition will be cited as '*Principall Navigations* 1589'.
13. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations* 1589, p. *3v. The object of this disdain may have been not cosmography so much as a particular French cosmographer, André Thevet, with whom Hakluyt appears to have had disillusioning contacts in the 1580s. Thevet was indeed notorious for expansive claims to describe regions he had seen only briefly, if at all, and for suppressing manuscripts from which he had drawn information he sought to claim as his own (including an account of French Florida that Hakluyt borrowed and published, to Thevet's dismay, while he was serving at the embassy in Paris). See F. Lestringant, *Le Huguenot et le sauvage* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2004), pp. 250–8.
14. W. Cuningham, *The Cosmographical Glasse* (London, 1559), p. 6v. Compare J. Davis, *The Seamans Secrets* (London, 1595): 'Geographie is the description of the earth onely, whereby the terrestriall forme in his due situation is given, whose distinction is by mountaines, riuers, vallies, cities, and places of fame, without regarde of the Circles, Clymates, or Zones. Cosmographie is the description of the heavens, with all that is contained within the circute thereof, but to the purpose of navigation, we must understand Cosmographie to be the uniuersall description of the terrestriall Globe, distinguished by all such circles, by which the distinction of the celestiall Sphere is understoode to be given, with every Countrie, Coast, Sea, Harborow, or other place, seated in their true longitude, latitude, Zone, and Clyme' (n.p.).
15. B. Pitiscus, *Trigonometry, or, The Doctrine of Triangles First Written in Latine by Bartholmeuu Pitiscus ... ; and Now Translated into English by Ra. Handson ; Wherunto is Added (for the Marriners Use) Certaine Nauticall Questions, Together with the Finding of the Variation of the Compasse ... by the Said R.H.* (London, 1614), p. A2r.
16. See inter alia Taylor, *Tudor Geography*; M. Feingold, *The Mathematicians' Apprenticeship: Science, Universities and Society in England, 1560–1640* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984); L. Cormack, *Charting an Empire: Geography at the English Universities, 1580–1620* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1997); E. Ash, *Power, Knowledge, and Expertise in Elizabethan England* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004); D. Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).
17. Hakluyt, 'Dedication', in *Principall Navigations* 1589, p. *2.
18. Columbus's scientific inheritance, and what he made of it, are described with painstaking and lucid detail in N. Wey-Gómez, *Tropics of Empire: Why Columbus Sailed South to the Indies* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008). I am indebted to him for the germ of this article.
19. R. Thorne, 'The Book Made by the Right Worshipful M. Robert Thorne ... to Doctour Ley', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 2, pp. 164–81, on p. 178. In fact, when English readers turned to works of cosmography printed after 1550, whether domestic or in translation, they would typically find a critical examination of classical theories regarding the torrid and tropic zones; at least on paper, the critical view Thorne ascribes to experience, in opposition to the 'general opinion of cosmographers', had been absorbed by cosmography only a few decades later.
20. Thorne, 'A Declaration', p. 162.

21. Ibid.
22. On the transmission of Thorne's materials, see R. C. D. Baldwin, 'Thorne, Robert, the Elder (*c.*1460–1519)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (January 2008), at http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27347 [accessed 3 March 2012].
23. Taylor, *Tudor Geography*, p. 24.
24. Cuningham, *Cosmographical Glasse*, p. A2r.
25. Ibid., p. 169.
26. Ibid., p. 121.
27. Recorde, *Castle*, p. 75.
28. Taylor, *Tudor Geography*, p. 94, referencing Harleian MSS. 167.
29. Recorde, *Castle*, p. 76.
30. Ibid., pp. 90, 75.
31. Ibid., p. 189.
32. Gilbert, 'Discourse', p. 172.
33. J. Janes, 'The First Voyage of M. John Davis...', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 381–93, on p. 381.
34. N. Wey-Gómez has outlined the intersection of early modern climate theory and ethnography, for the South, in *Tropics of Empire*; J. Chaplin explores related topics for North America in *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500–1676* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).
35. J. Davis, 'A Traverse-Book Made by M. John Davis in his Third Voyage...', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 424–39, on p. 435.
36. Janes, 'The First Voyage', pp. 385, 390.
37. J. Davis, 'The Second Voyage Attempted by M. John Davis', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 393–407, on p. 401.
38. Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 402.
39. Janes, 'The First Voyage', pp. 390, 385; Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 403; Davis, 'Traverse-Book', pp. 431, 433.
40. Modern travellers to the Antarctic report a subjective experience of 'heat' in the polar regions, even at temperatures that are objectively low (Susan Solomon, personal communication).
41. G. Best, *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discouerie, for the Finding of a Passage to Cathaya, by the Northweast, under the Conduct of Martin Frobisher Generall, etc.*, 3 vols (London: Henry Bynnyman, 1578).
42. On the opening page of a journal addressed to his surviving friends, Cavendish painted Davis as a 'villaigne that hath bynn the death of mee and the decaie of the whole Accon': in D. Quinn (ed.), *The Last Voyage of Thomas Cavendish 1591–92* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 52. The disputed events are outlined in Quinn's introduction, pp. 23–27. Cavendish's narrative would later be printed, in modified form, by Samuel Purchas in *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 4 vols (London, 1625), vol. 4, pp. 1192–1201.
43. G. Best, 'Experience and Reasons of the Sphere', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 252–83, on pp. 270, 273.
44. J. Davis, *The Worldes Hydrographical Discription* (London: 1595), p. B8r.
45. Davis, *Hydrographical Discription*, p. B5r. A long excerpt from this text appears as 'A Report of Master John Davis ... Taken Out of ... the Worlds Hydrographicall Description', in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 7, pp. 440–45; however, citations are to Davis's original of 1595.
46. This entire discussion is found in Davis, *Hydrographical Discription*, p. C4r.

47. Again, Davis's observations led him to a prescient understanding of Arctic climate as shaped by the interaction of solar heating and cooling with the tempering effect of the ocean. For a view from modern climate science, see S. Solomon, *The Coldest March: Scott's Fatal Antarctic Expedition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 112–13.
48. Davis, *Hydrographical Discription*, pp. A4r–v, C3v. Compare Robert Scott's similar observations, on the *Discovery* voyage of 1901–2, that air temperatures rose and fell according to whether when the wind blew from the sea or the land (cited in Solomon, *Coldest March*, p. 14).
49. The Grand Banks are now known to be significantly cooled by the Labrador Current, which also transports icebergs from western Greenland into more southerly waters.
50. Janes, 'The First Voyage', p. 385.
51. Davis, *Hydrographical Discription*, pp. B2r–v.
52. Ibid., p. C4v.
53. Ibid., pp. B2r–B2v, C4r, C5v.
54. R. Eden, preface to Martin Cortés, *The Art of Navigation* (London, 1561), p. CC2v. The original by Cortés, the Spanish cosmographer royal, was *Breve compendio de la sphera y de la arte de navegar* (Seville, 1551); it was brought to England by the Muscovy Company pilot Stephen Borough, who provided his copy to Eden, and appeared in numerous English editions through 1630.
55. Recorde, *Castle*, p. 75.
56. Davis, *Hydrographical Discription*, p. C2r.
57. See, for example, the essays collected in T. H. B. Symons (ed.), *Meta Incognita: A Discourse of Discovery – Martin Frobisher's Arctic Expeditions, 1576–1578*, 2 vols (Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1999).
58. H. Wallis, 'The First English Globe: A Recent Discovery', *Geographical Journal*, 117 (1951), pp. 275–90, on p. 275.
59. Lawrence Worms writes that 'the trade in maps and atlases is inherently international, with maps requiring little in the way of translation': 'Maps and Atlases', in J. Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (eds), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 4, 1557–1695 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 228–45, on p. 228.
60. The Hondius globe is currently at the Huntington Library.

2 Niayesh, 'From Myth to Appropriation: English Discourses on the Strait of Anian (1566–1628)'

1. S. Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 4 vols (London: William Stansby for Henry Fetherstone, 1625), vol. 3, sig. A2^{v}.
2. S. Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 6.
3. Quote taken from Giovanni Battista Ramusio's 1559 collection *Navigationi et Viaggi*, lib. III, cap. 5, fol. 51. Translation given in E. G. R. Taylor, *Tudor Geography, 1485–1583* (London: Methuen, 1930), p. 274.
4. Reproduced in G. Sykes, 'The Mythical Straits of Anian', *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, 47:3 (1915), pp. 161–72, fig. 7.
5. Reproduced in Sykes, 'The Mythical Straits of Anian', fig. 8.
6. M. B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 166.

7. H. Gilbert, *A Discourse of a Discouerie for a New Passage to Cataia* (London: Henry Middleton for Richard Jones, 1576).
8. See for more details H. Wallis, 'The Cartography of Drake's Voyage', in N. J. W. Thrower (ed.), *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage, 1577–1580: Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of Drake's Circumnavigation of the Earth* (Berkeley, CA and London: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 121–63.
9. Gilbert, *A Discourse*, sig. ¶¶4$^{r–v}$.
10. Ibid., sig. ¶¶¶1^{v}.
11. Ibid., sig. D2^{r}.
12. Ibid., sig. B1$^{r–v}$.
13. Ibid., sig. D3^{r}.
14. Ibid., sig. F3^{v}.
15. M. C. Fuller, *Voyages in Print: English Travel to America, 1576–1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 21.
16. B. L. Cotton MSS Otho E. VIII, fols 8–9, printed in J. Hampden (ed.), *Francis Drake, Privateer* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), pp. 111–13. See also K. R. Andrews, 'The Aims of Drake's Expedition of 1577–1580', *American Historical Review*, 73 (1968), pp. 724–41.
17. See for details Wallis, 'The Cartography of Drake's Voyage', pp. 121–2.
18. On these different accounts, see the introduction in R. C. Temple, *The World Encompassed, and Analogous Contemporary Documents Concerning Sir Francis Drake's Circumnavigation of the World, with an Appreciation of the Achievement* (London: Argnaut Press, 1926; repr., New York: Da Capo Press, 1971). For additional material on Drake's voyage, including Spanish and Portuguese sources, see Z. Nuttall, *New Lights on Drake* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1914).
19. R. Hakluyt, *The Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (London: George Bishop and Ralph Newberie, 1589), unsigned leaf corresponding to Mmm 7^{r}.
20. Despite the last-minute addition of 'The Famous Voyage' to Hakluyt's 1589 *Principall Navigations*, the name and fame of Nova Albion were part and parcel of the volume's propaganda, to the point of appearing in good place in the 1598–1600 edition, on the title page of the third volume where the Drake material was included: 'The third and last, including the English valiant attempts in searching almost all the corners of the vaste and new world of *America*, from 73. degrees of Northerly latitude Southward, to *Meta Incognita*, *Newfoundland*, the maine of *Virginia*, the point of *Florida*, the Baie of *Mexico*, all the Inland of *Noua Hispania*, the coast of *Terra firma*, *Brasill*, the riuer of *Plate*, to the Streight of *Magellan*: and through it, and from it in the South Sea to *Chili*, *Peru*, *Xalisco*, the Gulfe of *California*, *Noua Albion* vpon the backside of *Canada*, further then euer any Christian hitherto hath pierced'.
21. 'A verie late and great probabilitie of a passage, by the Northwest part of America in 58. degrees of Northerly latitude', unnumbered page opening Richard Hakluyt's *Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America* (London: Thomas Woodcocke, 1582).
22. Hakluyt, *Divers Voyages*, sig. ¶2^{r}.
23. The California portion appears in R. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, 3 vols (London: George Bishop, Ralfe Newberie and Robert Barker, 1598–1600), vol. 3, pp. 440–2, while the rest of the journey is printed in the same volume, pp. 730–42. See D. B. Quinn, 'Early Accounts of the Famous Voyage', in Thrower (ed.), *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage*, pp. 33–48.

24. R. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. 3, p. 440.
25. On Quivira and other details on this map, see R. R. Owens, 'The Myth of Anian', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 36:1 (1975), pp. 135–8, on p. 137.
26. B. Ashcroft, 'Afterword: Travel and Power', in J. Kuehn and P. Smethurst (eds), *Travel Writing, Form, and Empire: The Poetics and Politics of Mobility* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 229–42, on p. 234.
27. Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, vol. 3, pp. 849–52.
28. F. Drake, *The World Encompassed* (London: Nicholas Bourne, 1628). The section on the northern venture prior to the Nova Albion episode appears on pp. 62–7.
29. Ibid., p. 62.
30. Ibid., p. 64.
31. Ibid., p. 67.
32. These lines are a variation on a quatrain supposedly composed upon Drake's return in 1580 by a scholar of the college of Winchester. For more details see the English version of William Camden's *Annales*, 3 vols (London: Benjamin Fischer, 1625), vol. 2, p. 427. I am grateful to Jean-Pierre Brunterch of the Archives Nationales de France for his translation, as well as for bringing the original to my attention.
33. P. Nicholls, *Sir Francis Drake Reuiued: Calling Vpon this Dull or Effeminate Age, to Folowe his Noble Steps for Golde and Siluer* (London: Edward Allde for Nicholas Bourne, 1626).
34. J. Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Paul Turner (1971; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 70.

3 Bécasse, '"Not Now Believed": The Textual Fate of the Baffin and Bylot Expeditions (1615–16)'

1. C. R. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin, 1612–1622* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1881), p. 111.
2. D. Barrington, *The Possibility of Approaching the North Pole Asserted by the Honorable Daines Barrrington* (1775; New York: James Eastburn, 1818). Quoted by Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. lvii.
3. J. Ross, *Narrative of the Voyage of Discovery for the Purpose of Exploring Baffin's Bay, and Inquiring into the Probability of a North-West Passage* (London: John Murray, 1818), p. iii.
4. C. R. Markham, *The Lands of Silence: A History of Arctic and Antarctic Exploration*, posthumous, completed by F. H. H. Guillemard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921), p. 148.
5. See E. S. Dodge, *Northwest by Sea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 122–5.
6. See E. Baigent, 'Robert Bylot', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Online edition at http://oxforddnb.com/view/article/4260 [accessed 5 May 2012].
7. Dodge, *Northwest by Sea*, p. 134.
8. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin,* pp. 123–4.
9. Ibid., pp. 106–10.
10. S. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes; Contayning a History of the World, in Sea Voyages and Lande Travells, by Englishmen and Others His Pilgrims*, 4 vols (London: Printed by William Stansby for Henrie Fetherstone, 1625), vol. 3, p. 848.
11. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin,* pp. 131–2.
12. Ibid., p. 137.

13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p. 147.
15. Ibid., pp. 147–8.
16. Ibid., pp. 140–1.
17. Ibid., pp. 141–2.
18. 'For your course you must make all possible haste to the *Cape Desolation*, and from thence, you William Baffin as Pilot, keep along the Coast of Groenland and vp *Fretum Davis*, until you come toward the height of eighty degrees, if the land will give you leave. Then for feare of imbaying, by keeping too northerly a course, shape your course west and southerly, so farre as you shall thinke it convenient, till you come to the latitude of sixtie degrees; then direct your course to fall with the land of *Yedzo*, about that height, leaving you further sayling southward to your owne discretion, according as the time of the year and windes will give you leave; although our desires be, if your voyage prove so prosperous that you may have the year before you, that you goe so far southerly as that you may touch the north part of Iapan, from whence or from *Yedzo*, if you can so compasse it without danger, we would have you to bring home one of the men of the countrey, and so God blessing, you with all expedition to make your returne home againe': Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 174.
19. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 143.
20. Ibid., p. 150.
21. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus*, vol. 3, p. 848.
22. W. Baffin, 'Letter to the Right Worshippfull Sir John Wolstenholme, One of the Chiefe Adventurers for the Discovery of a Passage to the North-west', in Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, pp. 149–50, on p. 150.
23. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 143.
24. Ibid., p. lv.
25. Ibid., p. lvi
26. Ibid.
27. J. Barrow, *A Chronological History of Voyages into the Arctic Regions* (London: John Murray, 1818), p. xi.
28. Ross, *Exploring Baffin's Bay*, p. 3.
29. See F. Regard, 'John Ross, explorateur loufoque : analyse d'un cas de discrédit', *Études Anglaises*, 63:4 (2011), pp. 412–24.
30. W. E. Parry, *Journal of a Second Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific* (London: John Murray, 1824), p. 33.
31. T. Rundall, *Narratives of Voyages towards the North-West, in Search of a Passage to Cathay and India, 1496–1631* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1849).
32. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 1.
33. Markham, *The Lands of Silence*, p. 138.
34. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus*, vol. 3, p. 848.
35. Rundall, *Narratives*, p. 134.
36. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. l.
37. Ibid., p. 113.
38. M. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe of Hull and Thomas James of Bristol, 1631– 1632, With Narratives of the Earlier North-West Voyages of Frobisher, Davis, Weymouth, Hall, Knight, Hudson, Gibbons, Bylot, Baffin, Hawkridge, and Others*, 2 vols (London: Hakluyt Society,1894), vol. 1, pp. 204–5.
39. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 131.

40. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, vol. 1, p. 228.
41. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, pp. 133–4.
42. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus*, vol. 3, p. 841.
43. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, vol. 1, p. 209.
44. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 153.
45. Ibid., p. 111.
46. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, vol. 1, p. 202.
47. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 118.
48. Ibid.; Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus*, vol. 3, p. 838; M. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, vol. 1, p. 208.
49. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 131.
50. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, vol. 1, p. 216.
51. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 140.
52. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, vol. 1, p. 225.
53. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus*, vol. 3, p. 845.
54. Ibid., p. 848.
55. Ibid., p. 848.
56. Markham, *The Voyages of William Baffin*, p. 150.
57. Ibid., p. 156.
58. Ibid., p. 156.
59. Ibid., p. 143.
60. Christy (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, vol. 1, p. 227.
61. G. Williams, *Voyages of Delusion: The Northwest Passage in the Age of Reason* (London: HarperCollins, 2002), p. xviii.

4 Lemercier-Goddard, 'George Best's Arctic Mirrors: *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie ... of Martin Frobisher* (1578)'

1. G. Best, *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie for the Finding of a Passage to Cathaya by the North-West, under the Conduct of Martin Frobisher Generall* (London: Henry Bynnyman, 1578), reprinted in R. Collinson (ed.), *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher*, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867, rev. edn 1963), p. 75 (V1). V1, V2 and V3 will refer respectively to the three voyages undertaken by Frobisher.
2. Best, *Discourse*, p. 121 (V2).
3. Nearly £25,000 was spent on the voyages, with a final deficit of more than 20 per cent of expenditure: J. McDermott, 'The Company of Cathay: The Financing and Organization of the Frobisher Voyages', in T. H. B. Symons (ed.), *Meta Incognita: A Discourse of Discovery – Martin Frobisher's Arctic Expeditions, 1576–1578*, 2 vols (Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1999), vol. 1, pp. 147–78, on p. 173.
4. Best, *Discourse*, p. 72 (V1).
5. Ibid., pp. 242 ff. (V3).
6. See R. McGhee, *The Arctic Voyages of Martin Frobisher* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), p. 147.
7. Best, *Discourse*, p. 235 (V3).
8. M. C. Fuller, *Remembering the Early Modern Voyage: English Narratives in the Age of European Expansion* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 118–20.

9. Best's *Discourse* is the only report that covered all three expeditions. Dyonise Settle's account of the second voyage was published in 1577, Thomas Ellis's narrative of the third voyage in 1578.
10. Best, *Discourse*, p. 23 (V1).
11. Ibid., p. 19 (V1).
12. Ibid., p. 19–21 (V1).
13. Ibid., p. 36 (V1).
14. Ibid., p. 23, 41 (V1).
15. On the role of the queen as adventurer in the Frobisher voyages, see McDermott, 'The Company of Cathay', pp. 158–61.
16. Best, *Discourse*, p. 228 (V3).
17. The flag figured prominently in the assemblies and ceremonies of possession performed in Meta Incognita: see Best, *Discourse*, pp. 129, 134, 146 (V 2).
18. Best, *Discourse*, p. 21 (V1).
19. On the sense of local community which hindered the emergence of a national identity, see P. Fumerton, *Unsettled: The Culture of Mobility and the Working Poor in Early Modern England* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2006).
20. Best, *Discourse*, p. 231 (V3).
21. For a survey of the conventions of the epic, see W. J. Kennedy, *Rhetorical Norms in Renaissance Literature* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978), pp. 129–35.
22. For the original presentation, see the 1578 edition, pp. 3:5, 3:34, 3:53. Frobisher's instructions to the fleet prior to the second voyage were not published by Best but preserved in the State Paper Office and reproduced by Collinson. In the heading, Frobisher is 'Martyne Ffurbisher, Gent.', a lesser rank than esquire (Best, *Discourse*, p. 117 (V 2).
23. Best, *Discourse*, p. 72 (V1).
24. Ibid., my emphasis.
25. Ibid., p. 31 (V1).
26. Ibid., p. 34. Frobisher's expenses for the first voyage mention 'a great mappe universall of Mercator in prente': Best, *Discourse*, p. x.
27. Ibid., p. 35 (V1).
28. Ibid., p. 74 (V1).
29. Ibid., pp. 235–7, 260 (V3).
30. Ibid., p. 237 (V3).
31. Ibid., p. 148 (V2).
32. See Brutus's description of Albion in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (I:16).
33. See Kennedy, *Rhetorical Norms*, pp. 135, 191.
34. Best, *Discourse*, p. 267 (V3).
35. See for instance the recurrence of 'lo' in Shakespeare's history plays, nearly four times what it is in the comedies.
36. Best, *Discourse*, p. 131 (V2).
37. Ibid., p. 129 (V2).
38. Ibid., p. 134–5 (V2).
39. Ibid., p. 134 (V2). The drawing is to be found in the 1578 edition, p. 2:15.
40. See P. E. Pope, *Fish into Wine: The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).
41. Best, *Discourse*, p. 16 (V1).

42. See K. Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), p. 40.
43. See P. Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). About the use of analogy in the appropriation of the unknown, see S. Greenblatt's description of 'appropriative mimesis' in *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago, IL: The Chicago University Press, 1991), p. 99.
44. Best, *Discourse*, pp. 62–4 (V1).
45. Ibid., p. 69 (V1).
46. Ibid., p. 281 (V3).
47. Ibid., pp. 248, 254, 266 (V3).
48. Ibid., p. 73 (V1).
49. The Inuit's houses are mentioned in Christopher Hall's journal, published by Hakluyt in his *Principall Navigations* (London: 1589), and in unpublished state papers, probably an account by Michael Lok (Best, *Discourse*, p. 83).
50. Best, *Discourse*, p. 148 (V2).
51. The Queen's Foreland, named during the first voyage, was actually off the coast of Frobisher Bay, on the southeast tip of Resolution Island.
52. Best, *Discourse*, pp. 144–5 (V2).
53. Ibid., p. 150 (V2).
54. M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), trans. A Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979), p. 204.
55. Best, *Discourse*, p. 26 (V1).
56. About the discourse of the commonwealth in Elizabethan England, see W. H. Sherman, 'Anatomizing the Commonwealth', in E. Fowler and R. Greene (eds), *The Project of Prose in Early Modern Europe and the New World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 104–11.
57. Best, *Discourse*, p. 20 (V1).
58. Ibid., p. 128 (V2).
59. Ibid., p. 75 (V1).
60. Ibid., p. 128 (V2).
61. On the Edenic vision of the new world, see Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 78–9; M. Householder, 'Eden's Translations: Women and Temptation in Early America', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 70:1 (2007:1), pp. 11–36.
62. Best, *Discourse*, pp. 283–5 (V3).
63. Ibid., p. 286 (V3).
64. Ibid., p. 225 (V3); see also p. 21 (V1).
65. Ibid., p. 133 (V2).
66. Ibid., p. 137 (V2).
67. Ibid., p. 132 (V2).
68. They were either recycled at the end of the season as firewood for the return journey or taken back to England for resale, or for lack of time, abandoned and later dismantled by the Beothuk people of Newfoundland (Pope, *Fish into Wine*, pp. 22–3, 47).
69. Best, *Discourse*, p. 272 (V3).
70. Ibid., p. 130 (V2).
71. In a world of increased exchanges and mobility, the phonetic proximity between the English '*ore*' and the French '*or*' (gold) probably sounded like a promising omen to the ears of merchants and miners.
72. See N. Cox and K. Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 49–65.

73. Best, *Discourse*, p. 272 (V3).
74. On collecting as a vibrant social practice in early modern England, see M. Swann, *Curiosities and Texts: The Culture of Collecting in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), and D. Bleichmar and P. Mancall (eds), *Collecting Across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).
75. E. Fenton, 'The Canadian Arctic Journal of Capt. Edward Fenton, 1578', ed. W. A. Kenyon, *Archivaria*, 11 (1980), pp. 171–203, on p. 198.
76. Best, *Discourse*, p. 134 (V2).
77. For the emergence of an unsettled subjectivity defined by spatial mobility, see P. Fumerton, *Unsettled*, pp. 5, 50.
78. P. Burke, 'Representations of the Self from Petrarch to Descartes', in R. Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 17–28, on p. 24.
79. See P. Bourdieu, *Propos sur le champ politique* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 2000), pp. 52–61.
80. McGhee, *The Arctic Voyages*, pp. 167–8.
81. L. Stone and J. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite? England, 1540–1880* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).
82. T. Smith, *De Republica Anglorum, the Maner of Gouernement or Policie of the Realme of England* (London, 1583), p. 33. Smith's discourse was written in the early 1560s, and circulated widely before its publication.
83. See A. L. Hatfield, 'Mariners, Merchants, and Colonists in Seventeenth-Century English America', in E. Mancke and C. Shammas (eds), *The Creation of the British Atlantic World* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), pp. 139–59, on p. 140.
84. K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2002).
85. D. Shuger, 'The "I" of the Beholder: Renaissance Mirrors and the Renaissance Mind', in P. Fumerton and S. Hunt (eds), *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), pp. 21–41, on p. 21.
86. See Banquo's magic mirror reflecting the long line of his royal descendants in *Macbeth* (IV.1.134–5).
87. Fear of horses was by then a staple of colonial literature in the Americas; see for instance Bernal Diaz reporting the terror of the Tabascans (*The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico*, 1632).
88. About Roanoke's failure, see K. Kupperman, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1984, 2nd edn 2007), pp. 7–8, 15–23; and on the lure of privateering, see K. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire 1480–1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 362.

5 Mahieu and Popelard, '"A People of Tractable Conversation": A Reappraisal of Davis's Contribution to Arctic Scholarship'

1. See M. C. Fuller, *Remembering the Early Modern Voyage: English Narratives in the Age of European Expansion* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 1–20; R. McGhee, *The Last Imaginary Place: A Human History of the Arctic World* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2004), pp. 153–72.
2. Fuller, *Remembering*, pp. 16–17.

3. A simple search for 'John Davis' as a subject in the British Library integrated catalogue yields only two relevant results, whereas a similar search for 'Martin Frobisher' yields about twenty records. On Frobisher, see also T. A. B. Symons (ed.), *Meta Incognita: A Discourse of Discovery. Martin Frobisher's Arctic Expeditions, 1576–1578* (Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1999).
4. E. Dodge, *Northwest by Sea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 96.
5. Quoted by D. B. Quinn, *North America from Earliest Discovery to First Settlement: The Norse Voyages to 1612* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 372.
6. Quoted by S. E. Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages A. D. 500–1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 586.
7. For a detailed summary of Davis's voyages, see for example W. P. Cumming, R. A. Skelton and D. B. Quinn, *The Discovery of North America* (London: Elek, 1971), pp. 213–52.
8. See E. H. Ash, '"A Note and a Caveat for the Merchant"': Mercantile Advisors in Elizabethan England', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 33:1 (2002), pp. 1–31, especially on pp. 2–8.
9. J. Janes, 'The First Voyage of M. John Davis, Undertaken in June 1585 for the Discoverie of the Northwest Passage. Written by M. John Janes Marchant, Sometimes Servant to the Worshipfull Master William Sanderson', in R. Hakluyt, *The Principall Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation*, ed. J. Masefield, 10 vols (London: J. M. Dent, 1927), vol. 5, pp. 281–91 on p. 283.
10. Janes, 'The First Voyage', pp. 285–6.
11. Ibid., p. 286.
12. For a description of this episode and the Inuit's agility, see G. Best, *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie, for the Finding of a Passage to Cathaya, by the Northweast, Under the Conduct of Martin Frobisher Generall* (1578), ed. R. Collinson (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867), p. 73.
13. Janes, 'The First Voyage', p. 286.
14. Ibid.
15. Unlike the Inuit, though, the Algonkians were a 'poor people' who had not devised many tools or techniques to alleviate their agricultural chores. But Thomas Harriot praised their 'wit' and 'ingenuity': 'In respect of us they are a people poor, and for want of skill and judgement in the knowledge and use of our things, doe esteeme our trifles before things of greater value: Notwithstanding in their proper manner considering the want of such means as we have, they seem very ingenious; for although they have no such tooles, nor any such crafts, sciences and artes as we; yet in those things they doe, they shewe excellencie of wit': T. Harriot, A *Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588), ed. P. Hulton (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), p. 25.
16. Janes, 'The First Voyage', pp. 286–7.
17. Ash points out that Sebastian Cabot instructed novice explorers searching for the Northeast Passage not to meddle with religion when dealing with 'uncivilized people': 'the subject of religion was to be avoided at virtually all costs in order to prevent unnecessary conflicts and misunderstandings' ('Mercantile Advisors', p. 11).
18. Janes, 'The First Voyage', p. 287.
19. Ibid., p. 289.
20. Morison, *The European Discovery of America*, p. 592.
21. Janes, 'The First Voyage', p. 290.

22. J. Davis, 'The Second Voyage Attempted by M. John Davis with Others, for the Discoverie of the Northwest Passage', in Hakluyt, *The Principall Navigations,* vol. 5, pp. 291–303, on p. 292.
23. Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 293.
24. Davis gives a succinct description of the Inuit's tents, 'made with seal skins set up upon timber wherein they found great store of dried Caplin, being a little fish no bigger than a pilchard; they found bags of trane oil, many little images cut in wood, seal skins in tantubs, with many other such trifles' ('The Second Voyage', p. 293).
25. Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 294.
26. Ibid.
27. See D. Settle, 'The Second Voyage of Martin Frobisher to the West and Northwest Regions in the Yeere 1577', quoted in P. C. Mancall, *Hakluyt's Promise: An Elizabethan's Obsession for an English America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 53.
28. Davis, 'The Second Voyage', pp. 294–5.
29. Ibid., p. 295.
30. D. B. Quinn, 'Englishmen and Others', in *European Approaches to North America, 1450–1640* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 145–73, on p. 167.
31. Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 295.
32. Ibid., pp. 295–6.
33. Quinn, 'Englishmen and Others', p. 167.
34. Fuller points out that 'most of Frobisher's encounters with the Inuit were or became violent in varying degrees', which was certainly not the case with Davis: Fuller, *Remembering*, p. 26.
35. Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 297.
36. Ibid., p. 298.
37. Ibid.
38. See D. Settle, *A True Report of the Last Voyage into the West and Northwest Regions* (1577), quoted in Mancall, *Hakluyt's Promise*, p. 53.
39. Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 301.
40. 'Secretly lurking in the wood', the natives attacked a group of five English sailors, two of whom they killed: Davis, 'The Second Voyage', p. 303.
41. See M. Fortescue, S. Jacobson and L. Kaplan, *Comparative Eskimo Dictionary, With Aleut Cognates*, 2nd edn (Fairbanks, AK: Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, 2010). In modern usage, the term 'Eskimo' primarily refers to the linguistic family comprised of the Inuit dialect continuum and the Yupik languages. In some parts of the Arctic, one also calls 'Eskimos' the people whose ancestral language belongs to the Eskimo linguistic family, namely the Inuit and the Yupiit.
42. The list features in Hall's account of Frobisher's first voyage: C. Hall, 'The First Voyage of Mr Martin Frobisher to the Northwest for the Search of a Passage to China; anno 1576', in Hakluyt, *The Principall Navigations*, vol. 5, pp. 131–7, on p. 137. For more details, see below note 49.
43. L.-J. Dorais, *The Language of the Inuit: Syntax, Semantics and Society in the Arctic* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), p. 110.
44. Markham explains that 'Dr. Rink, the Director of Royal Greenland Trade at Copenhagen, and formerly Royal Inspector of South Greenland, has very kindly examined these Eskimo terms, and compared them with those now in use amongst the Greenlanders, with the following result': A. H. Markham, *The Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1880), p. 21.

45. See Dorais, *The Language of the Inuit*, p. 108.
46. We would like to thank Michael Fortescue and Larry Kaplan for kindly considering our hypotheses. We are also grateful to Naja Trondhjem, a native speaker of West Greenlandic and a teacher and scholar at the Institute of Eskimology, University of Copenhagen, who gave us her opinion about several forms of the list.
47. In the morpheme glosses we use the following abbreviations: 1, first-person; 2, second-person; 3, third-person; ANAPH, anaphoric prefix; ANTIP, antipassive; DU, dual; FUT, future; IMPER, imperative mood; INDIC, indicative mood; INSTR, instrumental case; INTERJ, interjective form; LOC, locative case; PL, plural; POSS, possessive suffix; RELAT, relative case; SG, singular; TRANSL, translative case.
48. Markham, *The Voyages and Works of John Davis*, p. 21. By contrast, Dorais's view seems too severe and rather unfair: 'Unfortunately for us, Davis and his scribe were much worse linguists than Christopher Hall. Many of their words are thus unrecognizable. Moreover, the explorer did not always understand what his informants were trying to tell him': Dorais, *The Language of the Inuit*, p. 108.
49. See Hall, 'The First Voyage of Mr Martin Frobisher', p. 137: 'argotteyt "a hand", cangnawe "a nose", arered "an eye", keiotot "a tooth", mutchatet "the head", chewat "an eare", comagaye "a legge", atoniagay "a foote", callagay "a pair of breeches", attegay "a coate", polleuetagay "a knife", accaskay "a shippe", coblone "a thumbe", teckkere "the foremost finger", ketteckle "the middle finger", mekellacane "the fourth finger", yacketrone "the litle finger"'.
50. See Fortescue et al., *Comparative Eskimo Dictionary*, p. 7.
51. As can be seen by comparing the words *mysacoah*, *uderah* and *pignagogah* (Proto-Eskimo stems: *məcuɣ-, *qəŋaɣ, *pəɣnəɣ) with the words *yliaoute*, *sugnacoon* and *icune* (Proto-Eskimo stems: ***i**la-, *c**i**qni-, ***i**ka-).
52. See Fortescue et al., *Comparative Eskimo Dictionary*, p. 474.
53. Ibid., p. 353.
54. See K. Bergsland and J. Rischel (eds), *Pioneers of Eskimo Grammar* (Copenhagen: The Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen, 1986).
55. Dorais, *The Language of the Inuit*, pp. 108–9.
56. See W. O. Quine, *Word and Object* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960). At the outset of the second chapter (p. 28), which presents the 'gavagai' problem, Quine introduces the concept of radical translation in the following way: 'The recovery of a man's current language from his currently observed responses is the task of the linguist, who, unaided by an interpreter, is out to penetrate and translate a language hitherto unknown. All the objective data he has to go on are the forces that he sees impinging on the native's surfaces and the observable behavior, vocal and otherwise, of the native. Such data evince "meanings" only of the most objectively empirical or stimulus-linked variety. And yet the linguist apparently ends up with native "meanings" in some quite unrestricted sense; purported translations, anyway, of all possible native sentences. Translation between kindred languages, e.g., Frisian and English, is aided by resemblance of cognate word forms. Translation between unrelated languages, e.g., Hungarian and English, may be aided by traditional equations that have evolved in step with a shared culture. What is relevant rather to our purposes is *radical* translation, i.e., translation of the language of a hitherto untouched people'.
57. J. Axtell, *After Colombus, Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), especially on p. 31.

58. M. Lok, 'East India by the Northwestward' (1577), MS Otho, E., viii, fol. 46 (47), in V. Stefansson and E. McCaskill (eds), *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher*, 2 vols (London: Argonaut Press), vol. 1, p. 161.

6 MacLaren, 'Booking a Northwest Passage: Thomas James and *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* (1633)'

1. This chapter substantially abbreviates and revises an essay entitled '"Zealous Sayles" and Zealous Sales: Bookings on the Northwest Passage', *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 64 (Winter 2003), pp. 252–87.
2. W. K. D. Davies sets out the evidence for James's Welsh (Monmouthshire) origins in *Writing Geographical Exploration: Thomas James and the Northwest Passage, 1631–32* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2003), pp. 173–5, 178, 203, 205. Also, from his research in the Bristol Society of Merchant Venturers' Book of Trade: 1631–2 as well as the Domestic Calendar of State Papers, James I, 1628–9, Davies argues conclusively that James 'must have acquired a considerable knowledge of the sea' (p. 174).
3. Glyndwr Williams has asked why James's fascinating title was not emulated by his successors; indeed, many narratives of exploration appear to have attracted the most pedestrian of titles. At least as far as their half-titles are concerned, they merely indicate a destination, as if anxious to remain as understated and modest as possible; if they are mentioned at all, exceptional qualities are relegated to the subtitle. Apart from James's possible indebtedness to Gerrit de Veer's account of Willem Barentz's Dutch voyages in search of a northeast passage, the English translation of which was *The True and Perfect Description of Three Voyages, So Strange and Woonderfull, that the Like hath Neuer been Heard of Before* (London: Printed for T. Pauier, 1609), there is no clear answer to the question.
4. See I. S. MacLaren, 'English Writings about the New World', in *History of the Book in Canada, Vol. 1: Beginnings to 1840*, ed. P. L. Fleming, G. Gallichan and Y. Lamonde (Toronto and Montréal: University of Toronto Press and les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2004), pp. 33–44.
5. T. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage of Captaine Thomas Iames in his intended Discouery of the Northwest Passage into the South Sea. Wherein The Miseries Indvred Both Going, Wintering, Returning; and the Rarities Obserued, both Philosophicall and Mathematicall, are Related in this Iournall of it. By His Maiesties Command. To Which are Added, A Plat or Card for the Sayling in those Seas. Diuers Little Tables of the Author's, of the Variation of the Compasse, &c. With An Appendix concerning Longitude, by Master Henry Gellibrand Astronomy Reader of Gresham Colledge in London. And An Aduise Concerning the Philosophy of these late Discoueryes, By W*[illiam]. *W*[atts] (London: Printed by John Legatt for John Partridge, 1633; facs. repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum; New York: Da Capo, 1968), p. [i]. Throughout, quotations of Thomas James's and Luke Foxe's narratives are drawn from the facsimile reprints of the first editions and follow their spelling and punctuation. As well, notes will refer readers to the location of the quotation or reference in the standard scholarly edition, Miller Christy's authoritative two-volume, continuously paginated edition of the pair of them, *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe of Hull, and Captain Thomas James of Bristol, in Search of a Northwest Passage, in 1631–32; with Narratives of the Earlier North-West Voyages of Frobisher, Davis, Weymouth, Hall, Knight, Hudson, Button, Gibbons, Bylot, Baffin, Hawkridge, and Others*, 2 vols (London: Hakluyt Society, 1894; facs. repr., New York: Burt Franklin, 1966), on p. 453.

6. The date of James's first interview is given in Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. cxlvi; see also pp. xcvi, cxl, clix–clxi.
7. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. [ii]; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 454. James's report of the details of this interview survives in his letter to the merchants of Bristol, 19 November 1632, printed in Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. clxvii–clxviii. Foxe, as well, published by royal command (p. clxxvii).
8. For other examples of such expressions, see James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, pp. 63, 88, 101; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. 534, 564, 581. At one point, James even refers to himself as the 'vnworthy' commander (p. 112; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 594).
9. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. [ii]; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 454. For the humility (*atechnos*) topos in the genre, generally, see I. S. MacLaren, 'In Consideration of the Evolution of Explorers and Travellers into Authors: A Model', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 15 (2011), pp. 221–41, on p. 224.
10. See J. Cook, *A Voyage towards the South Pole, and Round the World. Performed in His Majesty's Ships the Resolution and Adventure, in the Years, 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, ed. J. Douglas, 2 vols (London: Printed for W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777); and J. Cook, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean. Undertaken by the Command of His Majesty, for Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere in His Majesty's Ships Resolution and Discovery*, ed. J. Douglas, 3 vols (London: Printed by W. and A. Strahan, for G. Nicol and T. Cadell, 1784).
11. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 110; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 592. Christy identifies the period as five months (pp. clxxvi–clxxxvii). 'Hastily written' is James's wording in the last paragraph of his account. Phrasing later in that paragraph, however, suggests that this avowal might have amounted only to a rhetorical instance of *sprezzatura* (making a difficult achievement appear easy), much prized in Renaissance art. Indeed, James undoes the effect by claiming as well to have 'spent some time in rendring a relation (since my comming home)' (p. 111; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 592).
12. *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* had been preceded by Jens Munk's account of his voyage to and winter spent on the west coast of Hudson Bay in 1619–20, more than a decade before James: J. Munk, *Navigatio Septentrionalis. Det er: Relation eller bescriffuelse om seiglads oc reyse paa denne Norduestiske Passagie, som nu kaldis NovaDania* ... (Copenhagen: Hoss Henrich Waldkirch, 1624). Munk's voyage in two ships with sixty-two men was sponsored by King Christian IV of Denmark, and his book was published with the king's approval. James's book mentions neither Munk nor his book; to what extent the Norwegian-Dane's narrative served as a precedent for either the Welshman's voyage or his published account remains unknown.
13. J. Harris (comp.), *Navigantium atque itinerantium bibliotheca, or, A compleat Collection of Voyages and Travels: Consisting of Above Four Hundred of the Most Authentick Writers, Beginning with Hackluti, Purchass, &c. in English; Ramussio in Italian; Thevenot, &c. in French; De Bry, and Grynoei Novus Orbis in Latin; the Dutch East-India Company in Dutch* ... , 2 vols (London: Printed for Thomas Bennet, John Nicholson and Daniel Midwinter, 1705); Harris (comp.), *Navigantium atque itinerantium bibliotheca, or, A Compleat Collection of Voyages and Travels: Consisting of Above Four Hundred of the Most Authentick Writers, Beginning with Hackluti, Purchass, &c. in English; Ramussio in Italian; Thevenot, &c. in French; De Bry, and Grynoei Novus Orbis in Latin; the Dutch East-India Company in Dutch ... Now Carefully Revised with Large Additions* ... , ed. J.

Campbell, 2 vols (London: Printed for T. Woodward etc., 1744–8; repr., London: T. Osborne, 1764), vol. 2, p. 407. Campbell may have been favourably disposed toward *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage* because James never denied the existence of a Northwest Passage. Belief in such a route was vital to an author who had produced an edition of Harris's *Navigantium* that was 'passionate in its advocacy of British overseas trade'; see G. Williams, *Voyages of Delusion: The Quest for the Northwest Passage* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 149.

14. See James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 4; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. 458–9.
15. Reverend Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 30 January 1630–1, quoted in Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. lxiii.
16. The Yorkshireman published his *North-West Fox* no later than 4 February 1635, five months before his own death on or about 15 July, but only several weeks or at most three months before James's death from an illness that had begun at least a year earlier. (James's will was proved on 4 May 1635; see Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. cxxiv, cxxx, cciv–ccv.)
17. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. [iii]; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 7.
18. Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. [vi–vii], 10–11 (brackets in these passages appear in Christy).
19. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, pp. 27–8; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. 489–90.
20. See, for example, 'Seafaring and Travel', in *Cambridge History of English Literature*, ed. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller, 15 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907–1927), vol. 4, pp. 105–8. The eighteenth century's correlative issues of speculative geography and cartography in contrast to the experience of explorers receive discussion in Williams, *Voyages of Delusion*, pp. 255, 257, 264, 288, 365–70, 379, 383.
21. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 171; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 263. On Briggs, see K. Neal, 'Mathematics and Empire, Navigation and Exploration: Henry Briggs and the Northwest Passage Voyages of 1631', *Isis*, 93 (2002), pp. 435–53.
22. Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. cxxii, cxciii–cxcv, civ–cvii.
23. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, pp. 250–1; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 416.
24. Christy nominates the account of the winter spent on Charlton Island as 'the most generally interesting portion of his book' (*Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. clxxiv).
25. That James had no prior naval career or experience in searching for a Northwest Passage is uncertain; Christy assesses the slim evidence (*Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. cxxxi, cxxxiii–cxxxivn). James handpicked his crew of twenty-two men, perhaps to preclude a repetition of the mutiny that in the same waters two decades before had claimed the lives of Hudson, his son, A. Ladley, J. King, M. Butt, T. Woodhowse, A. Moore, P. Staff and S. Fanner (see C. Holland, *Arctic Exploration and Development, c.500 B. C. to 1915: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 1994), p. 33). By contrast, Christy suggests that James resolved to take with him no one with experience in Arctic waters so that the captain's own ignorance would not be shown up (*Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. clv). No mutiny occurred, but four men died during the voyage. James's choice of a single, relatively small ship turned out to be as wise as his quite clear conclusion that no Northwest Passage existed through Hudson Strait (Davies, *Writing Geographical Exploration*, concurs (p.

220)). Unsurprisingly, Roald Amundsen, the first mariner to successfully navigate it, did so between 1903 and 1906 in a forty-seven-ton motor yacht, the *Gjoa*.

26. A nearly complete summary of the printings is given in Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. clxxxiii–clxxxvi.
27. J. Churchill and A. Churchill (comp.), *A Collection of Voyages and Travels: Some Now First Printed from Original Manuscripts. Others Translated out of Foreign Languages, and Now First Publish'd in English. To Which are Added Some Few that Have Formerly Appear'd in English, but Do Now for their Excellency and Scarceness Deserve to be Reprinted. With a General Preface, Giving an Account of the Progress of Navigation, from its First Beginning to the Perfection It Is Now In, &c*, 4 vols (London: Printed for Awnsham and J. Churchill, 1704), vol. 2, pp. 479–544; 2nd edn, 6 vols (London: Printed for John Walthoe et al., 1732), vol. 2, pp. 429–88; 3rd edn, 6 vols (London: Printed for Henry Lintot and John Osborn, 1744–6), vol. 2, pp. 407–66.
28. Harris (comp.), *Navigantium* (1705), vol. 1, pp. 593–608.
29. J. Campbell (ed.), *Navigantium* (see above, note 13), vol. 2, pp. 406–36.
30. J. Barrow, *A Chronological History of Voyages into the Arctic Regions: Undertaken Chiefly for the Purpose of Discovering a North-east, North-west or Polar Passage Between the Atlantic and Pacific...* (London: John Murray, 1818), pp. 243–52. See Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. clxxxv–clxxxvi.
31. T. Rundall, *Narrative of Voyages towards the North-west, in Search of a Passage to Cathay and India, 1496 to 1631* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1849; facs. repr., New York: Burt Franklin, 1969), pp. 186–224.
32. Of particular note is a highly abridged nineteenth-century edition made in the third person for the juvenile reader. See *Voyages and Distresses of Captain T. James and Mr. H. Ellis for the Discovery of a North-West Passage to the South Seas*, Juvenile Library, no. 38 (London: J. Arliss, 1807), pp. 1–32. The first Canadian edition was a facsimile reprint of the second, corrupt edition, of 1740: *The Dangerous Voyage of Capt. Thomas James, in his intended Discovery of a Northwest Passage into the South Sea* (London: Reprinted for O. Payne et al., 1740; facs. repr., Toronto: Coles, 1973). The most recent edition is *The Strange and Dangerous Voyage of Capt. Thomas James*, ed. W. Kenyon (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1975).
33. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 44; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 511.
34. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 81; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 556.
35. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 87; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. 562–3.
36. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 87; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 563.
37. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 86; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 562.
38. 1 Cor. 13:12. Throughout, biblical quotations are from the Authorized (King James) Version.
39. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 55; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 524.
40. A. Cooke, 'James, Thomas', *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, ed. G. W. Brown and M. Trudel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), vol. 1, p. 385.

41. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 101; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 581.
42. T. Sprat, 'Their Manner of Discourse', sec. 20, in *The History of the Royal Society* (1667), facs. repr., ed. J. I. Cope and H. W. Jones (St Louis, MO: Washington University; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959).
43. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 64; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 535.
44. R. Boyle, *The Works of Robert Boyle*, ed. M. Hunter and E. B. Davis, 14 vols (London and Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 1999–2000), vol. 12, p. 112.
45. Boyle, *The Works of Robert Boyle*, vol. 4, p. 221. The reference to Nova Zembla (now Nova Zemlaya) is intriguing because it suggests that Boyle, if not James, knew of the comparison drawn between the cold of Hudson Bay and that of the Russian Arctic by Jens Munk, the only published mariner whose experience had extended to both places. See N. T. Corley, 'Munk (Munck), Jens Eriksen', *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, p. 515.
46. Boyle, *The Works of Robert Boyle*, vol. 4, p. 221.
47. E. Pognon, 'Cosmology and Cartography', *Arctic*, 37 (1984), pp. 334–40, on p. 339.
48. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 86; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 562.
49. Harris (comp.), *Navigantium atque itinerantium*, ed. Campbell, vol. 2, p. 407.
50. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 47; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 514.
51. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 76; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 549.
52. R. B. Bodilly, *The Voyage of Captain Thomas James for the Discovery of the North-West Passage, 1631* (London and Toronto: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1928), p. 147.
53. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 76; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 549.
54. Boyle, *The Works of Robert Boyle*, vol. 4, p. 295.
55. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 84; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 559.
56. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 92; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 570.
57. Eccles. 4:2.
58. J. Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667), transcr. J. Boss, Renascence Editions, *https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/.../lost.pdf* (accessed June 2012), ll. 587–91, 594–605). See R. R. Cawley, *Milton's Literary Craftsmanship: A Study of 'A Brief History of Moscovia'* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1941); and R. D. Bedford, 'Milton's Journeys North: *A Brief History of Moscovia* and *Paradise Lost*', *Renaissance Studies*, 7 (1993), pp. 71–85. Another possible allusion must, however, be noted, as well – Dante thus describes those in the seventh circle of his Inferno: 'this way and that they flapped their hands, for ease / From the hot soil now, and now from the burning snow' (D. Alighieri, *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine. Cantica I: L'Inferno*, trans. D. L. Sayers (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1949), XVII:48–9.
59. See J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu: A Study in the Way of the Imagination* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1955), pp. 121–3, 129–30, 155; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. clxxxix–cxciii.

60. For a discussion of this possible indebtedness, see I. S. MacLaren, 'Arctic Exploration and Milton's "Frozen Continent"', *Notes and Queries*, 31 (1984), pp. 325–6.
61. Isa. 14:12–14; Jer. 1:14, 4:6, 6:1. Bedford, 'Milton's Journeys North', p. 83. Colleen Franklin notes that the association of Lucifer with the North was widespread in the patristic literature of medieval Europe and down through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, faltering only slightly when expeditions began venturing into the Arctic and, usually, returning again (C. Franklin, '"Steering against the Tyde of Satan's Malice": *The Strange and Dangerous Voyage of Captaine Thomas James*', *Northern Review*, 17 (1996), pp. 85–96).
62. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, pp. 88–9; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. 564–5.
63. Indeed, Ivor James saluted the entire volume as 'one of the most remarkable productions in the English language': *The Source of 'The Ancient Mariner'* (Cardiff: Daniel Owen, 1890; facs. repr. Folcroft, PA: Folcroft Press, 1969), p. 76. His research into Thomas James is mentioned by Christy in *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. cxxii. Alistair Fowler makes a recent tacit acknowledgement of the poem's worth by selecting it for his anthology, *The New Oxford Book of Seventeenth-Century Verse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), no. 413.
64. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 38; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 505.
65. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 39; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 505.
66. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 110; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 592.
67. Ps. 42:5, 11; 43:5.
68. Ps. 42:6–7, 10. See *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, ed. H. G. May and B. M. Metzger (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 687n.
69. James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 38; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, p. 504.
70. W. Folkingham, *Fevdigraphia: The Synopsis or Epitome of Surueying Methodized* ... (London: Printed for R. Moore, 1610), 11.vi.56; *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. 'fly' (2).
71. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. 'fly' (1d).
72. James's poems receive discussion in the context of other poetry about the Northwest Passage in I. S. MacLaren, 'Tracing One Discontinuous Line through the Poetry of the Northwest Passage', *Canadian Poetry: Studies, Documents, Reviews*, 30 (Fall/Winter 1996), pp. 7–48.
73. The scientific instruments are listed at James, *The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage*, p. 4; Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. 458–9. These contradictions notwithstanding, the poem's theme does accord with the view of Admiral Sir Thomas Button, made on 16 February 1628. See Christy (ed.), *Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe*, pp. lxvi–lxvii.
74. See Davies, *Writing Geographical Exploration,* pp. 47, 247, 253.
75. Barrow, *Chronological History*, p. 250.

7 Zimpfer, 'Anthropology as Curiosity: Samuel Hearne's *Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort ... to the Northern Ocean in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771 & 1772* (1795)'

1. See J. S. Galbraith, *The Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor, 1821–1869* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1957), p. 101.
2. J. Douglas, 'Introduction', in *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean ... Performed under the direction of Captains Cook, Clerke, and Gore, In His Majesty's Ships the Resolution and Discovery. In the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, and 1780...*, ed. J. Douglas (London, 1784), pp. xlvi–l. See I. S. MacLaren, 'From Exploration to Publication: The Evolution of a 19th-Century Arctic Narrative', *Arctic*, 47:1 (March 1994), pp. 43–53, on p. 44.
3. R. Glover, 'Introduction', in S. Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772* (1795), ed. R. Glover (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1958), p. xxviii.
4. I. S. MacLaren, 'Exploration/Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Author', *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 5 (1992), pp. 39–68, on p. 40.
5. I. S. MacLaren, 'Samuel Hearne's Accounts of the Massacre at Bloody Fall, 17 July 1771', *ARIEL* 22. 1 (January 1991), pp. 25–51, on p. 27.
6. S. Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean: In the Years 1769, 1770, 1771, and 1772 by Samuel Hearne* (1795), ed. J. B. Tyrrell (Toronto: The Chaplain Society, 1911), p. 30. Unless specified otherwise, all further references will be to this edition.
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8. W. C. Horne, 'The Phenomenology of Samuel Hearne's Journey to the Coppermine River (1795): Learning the Arctic', *Ethics Place and Environment*, 8: 1 (March 2005), pp. 39–59, on pp. 40, 41.
9. T. D. MacLulich, 'Canadian Exploration as Literature', *Canadian Literature*, 81 (1979), pp. 72–84, on p. 74.
10. B. M. Benedict, 'The "Curious Attitude" in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Observing and Owning', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 14 (November 1990), pp. 59–98, on p. 59.
11. A. Pope, *Essay on Criticism* (1711), Part II, ll. 285–6, in E. Audra and A. Williams (eds), *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope: Volume 1 Pastoral Poetry and an Essay on Criticism* (London: Methuen; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 271.
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13. S. Johnson, *A Dictionary of English Language* (London: W. Strahan, 1755).
14. Hearne, *Journey*, 'Editor's Introduction', p. 2.
15. B. M. Benedict, *Curiosity. A Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 1.
16. B. Greenfield, *Narrating Discovery. The Romantic Explorer in American Literature, 1790–1855* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 60.
17. Hearne, *Journey*, 'Editor's Introduction', p. 2
18. Hearne, *Journey*, 'Preface', p. 27.
19. Hearne, *Journey*, pp. 93, 99.

20. M. L. Pratt, 'Scratches on the Face of the Country; or, What Mr. Barrow Saw in the Land of the Bushmen', in H. L. Gates, Jr (ed.), *'Race', Writing, and Difference* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 138–62, on pp. 139–40.
21. J. Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (1983; New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 80.
22. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 402.
23. Fabian, *Time and the Other*, p. 81.
24. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 113.
25. See K. D. Hutchings, 'Writing Commerce and Cultural Progress in Samuel Hearne's "A Journey ... to the Northern Ocean"', *ARIEL*, 28:2 (April 1997), pp. 49–78, on p. 66.
26. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 185.
27. See H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 64.
28. The concept of the 'good savage' was not however unknown in England. It had been introduced by John Dryden's *The Conquest of Grenada* (1664). See P. J. Marshall and G. William, *The Great Map of Mankind: British Perceptions of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (London, Melbourne and Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1982), p. 30.
29. N. Wolloch, 'The Civilizing Process, Nature, and Stadial Theory', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 44:2 (Winter 2011), pp. 245–59, on p. 253.
30. Robertson, *History*, p. 166.
31. J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (1689), ed. P. Laslett (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 319.
32. Quoted in R. F. Berkhofer, Jr, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), p. 131.
33. I. S. MacLaren, 'Samuel Hearne and the Landscapes of Discovery', *Canadian Literature*, 103 (1984), pp. 27–40, on p. 33.
34. See MacLaren, 'Massacre', pp. 41, 32.
35. Hearne, *Journey*, pp. 219, 300, 99, 288.
36. Ibid., pp. 180, 281, 322, 18, 122, 265, 326.
37. Ibid., pp. 179–81, 100, 316, 322, 331.
38. J. Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730–1840: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 6.
39. Hearne, *Journey*, pp. 66, 74, 78, 72, 73.
40. Ibid., pp. 84, 337.
41. Greenfield, *Narrating Discovery*, p. 27.
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43. Hearne, *Journey*, pp. 149, 150.
44. Ibid., p. 150.
45. Greenfield, *Narrating Discovery*, pp. 27, 48.
46. Hearne, *Journey*, pp. 84, 112, 124, 154, 197, 212, 230, 236.
47. Ibid., pp. 122–4.
48. Robertson, *History*, p. 141.
49. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 107.
50. Ibid., pp. 57, 101.
51. Ibid., p. 67.
52. Ibid., pp. 90, 292.
53. Examples of these may be found on pages 108, 114, 118, 123,134, 136, 180, 212, 227, 230, 236, 290, 306, 376.

54. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 174.
55. See N. Zimpfer, 'Domestication de l'Autre et création de soi: *The Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure, 1772–1775*, by Captain James Cook', in F. Regard (ed.), *De Drake à Chatwin. Rhétoriques de la découverte* (Lyon: ENS Éditions, 2007), pp. 83–106, on pp. 99 ff.
56. Hearne, *Journey*, pp. 154–5, 271, 299.
57. Ibid., pp. 107, 102, 107.
58. Robertson, *History*, pp. 150–1.
59. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 102.
60. Ibid., pp. 107, 329–30.
61. J. Lamb, 'Fantasies of Paradise', in M. Fitzpatrick, P. Jones, C. Knellwolf and I. McCalman (eds), *The Enlightenment World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 521–35, on p. 526.
62. C. Cundell, 'The Disorder of Things: Empiricism and the Cartographic Enterprise, or, the Observations of Samuel Hearne (1795) and Alexander Mackenzie (1801)' in F. Regard (ed.), *British Narratives of Exploration: Case Studies of the Self and Other* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), pp. 107–17, on p. 113.
63. See in particular N. Kenny, *Curiosity in Early Modern Europe: Word Histories*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 81 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), p. 15.
64. See H. Blumenberg, 'The Trial of Theoretical Curiosity', in *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. M. Wallace (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1983), pp. 229–453.
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66. M. Foucault, *Les Mots et les choses. Une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), p. 144.
67. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 32.
68. L. Wolff, 'Discovering Cultural Perspective: The Intellectual History of Anthropological Thought in the Age of Enlightenment', in L. Wolff and M. Cipolloni (eds), *The Anthropology of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 3–34, on p. 7.
69. E. Burke, *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke, July 1774–June 1778*, ed. G. H. Guttridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 351.
70. H. Liebersohn, 'Anthropology before Anthropology', in H. Kuklick (ed.), *A New History of Anthropology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 17–31.
71. Hearne, *Journey*, pp. 100, 253, 278.
72. Ibid., p. 241.
73. Ibid., p. 249.
74. Ibid., pp. 249, 257.
75. Ibid., pp. 258, 166. For other occurrences of Hearne doubting 'the truth' of previous reports, see pp. 196, 249, 258.
76. Hearne, *Journey*, 'Preface', p. 30.
77. P. Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1797* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 83.
78. See C. Moser, 'Walking in the Contact Zone: Georg Forster and the Peripatetic Mode of Exploration (1768–1777)', in F. Regard (ed.), *British Narratives of Exploration*, pp. 97–105, on pp. 100–1.
79. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 85.
80. Ibid., note on pp. 85–6.

81. See MacLaren, 'Massacre', pp. 36–8.
82. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 85.
83. O. Goldsmith, 'Letter to the Reverend Henry Goldsmith' (1759), in *The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith, with an Account of his Life and Writings*, ed. W. Irving (Philadephia, PA: J. Crissy, 1833), on p. 23.
84. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 86.
85. Ibid., p. 155. Cf. J. Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), ed. A. Ingram (London; Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2012), part II, ch. 3, p. 153.
86. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 128.
87. Ibid., p. 129.
88. Ibid., p. 131.
89. Ibid., p. 131.
90. Ibid., p. 31.
91. P. Mason, 'Ethnographic Portraiture in the Eighteenth-Century: George Psalmanaazaar's Drawings of Formosans', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 23: 3 (November 1999), pp. 58–76, on p. 58.
92. G. S. Rousseau, 'Curiosity and the *Lusus Naturae*: The Case of "Proteus" Hill', in R. J. W. Evans and A. Marr (eds), *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 213–49, on p. 214.
93. Quoted by J. B. Tyrrell, in Hearne, *Journey*, 'Editor's Introduction', p. 3.
94. Marshall and William, *Great Map of Mankind*, p. 212.
95. Moser, 'Walking in the Contact Zone', pp. 98–9.
96. See for example M. T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Philadelphia Press, 1964).
97. Liebersohn, 'Anthropology before Anthropology', p. 19.
98. Hearne, *Journey*, p. 200.

8 Sayre, 'Alexander Mackenzie's Search for the Northwest Passage: The Commercial Imperative (1789–93)'

1. See G. Havard and C. Vidal, *Histoire de l'Amérique française* (Paris: Flammarion, 2003, rev. edn 2006), pp. 102–46. On the motivations of the explorers, see esp. pp. 103–4, 106, 120, 135, 145.
2. See chapter 3 'The Fur Trade' in R. White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 94–143, esp. pp. 97–8, 115.
3. See Havard and Vidal, *Histoire de l'Amérique française*, pp. 140–1, and G. H. Smith, *The Explorations of the La Vérendryes in the Northern Plains, 1738–43* (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1980).
4. Carver's account of the expedition was published in 1778. For a modern edition, see J. Carver, *Jonathan Carver's Travels Through America, 1766–1768* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1993).
5. See A. Henry, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories Between the Years 1760–1776* (New York: Riley, 1809).
6. On the significance of Mackenzie's discoveries, see *First Man West: Alexander Mackenzie's Journal of his Voyage to the Pacific Coast of Canada in 1793*, ed. W. Sheppe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 302; *Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander Mac-*

kenzie, ed. W. K. Lamb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Published for the Hakluyt Society, 1970), p. 529; B. Gough, *First Across the Continent: Sir Alexander Mackenzie* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), pp. 206–8.

7. Quoted in D. Hayes, *First Crossing: Alexander Mackenzie, His Expedition Across North America, and the Opening of the Continent* (Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 2001), p. 283. Mackenzie put his recommendations on paper as well. The full text is given in Gough, *First Across the Continent*, appendix 2, pp. 213–16.
8. Hayes, *First Crossing*, p. 11 ff.
9. For example, P. Vail, *The Magnificent Adventures of Alexander Mackenzie* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1964); B. C. Paton, *Adventuring with Boldness: The Triumph of the Explorers* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishers, 2006).
10. J. Woodworth and H. Flygare, *In the Steps of Alexander Mackenzie: Trail Guide* (Kelowna, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981); R. Twigger, *Voyageur: Across the Rocky Mountains in a Birchbark Canoe* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006).
11. M. H. Long, *Knights Errant of the Wilderness: Tales of the Explorers of the Great North-West* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1920); M. Shore and M. M. Oblinger, *Knight of the Wilderness: The Story of Alexander Mackenzie* (London: Hutchinson's Books for Young People, 1946).
12. P. C. Newman's *Company of Adventurers Vol. 2: Caesars of the Wilderness* (New York: Viking, 1987), which includes a chapter on Mackenzie, employs a more morally ambiguous metaphor however.
13. R. Daniells, *Alexander Mackenzie and the North West* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), p. 202.
14. Hayes, *First Crossing*, p.12.
15. J. K. Smith, *Alexander Mackenzie, Explorer: The Hero Who Failed* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1973), p. 2. Daniells also acknowledges that Mackenzie's explorations were only an 'interlude' in a career in trade: see Daniells's introduction in A. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal on the River St. Laurence through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans*, ed. R. Daniells, fasc. repr. of 1st edn (Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig, 1971), p. vii.
16. Gough, *First Across the Continent*, p. 5. See also pp. 108–9.
17. Sheppe (ed.), *First Man West*, p. 306.
18. Mackenzie was born in Stornoway in the Hebrides in 1764. On the Scottish fur traders, see F. M. Szasz, *Scots in the North American West, 1790–1917* (Norman, OK and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000).
19. See Smith, *Alexander Mackenzie, Explorer*, pp. 53, 57.
20. On Pond, his character, project and association with Mackenzie, see: *Exploring the Northwest Territory: Sir Alexander Mackenzie's Journal of a Voyage by Bark Canoe from Lake Athabasca to the Pacific Ocean in the Summer of 1789*, ed. T. H. McDonald (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), pp. 12–14; Newman, *Caesars of the Wilderness*, pp. 52–6, 59; Smith, *Alexander Mackenzie, Explorer*, pp. 51–3, 56–8.
21. See Newman, *Caesars of the Wilderness*, pp. 62–3; McDonald (ed.), *Exploring the Northwest Territory*, p. 120.
22. Quoted in Gough, *First Across the Continent*, p. 105; see also p. 108.
23. See Gough, *First Across the Continent*, p. 163.
24. See Hayes, *First Crossing*, p. 278.
25. Smith, *Alexander Mackenzie, Explorer*, p. 154.
26. See Gough, *First Across the Continent*, pp. 6, 169–71.

27. See Daniells (ed.), *Voyages*, introduction, p. vii; McDonald (ed.), *Exploring the Northwest Territory*, introduction, pp. 24, 26; Hayes, *First Crossing*, p. 7.
28. M. Quaife (ed.), *Alexander Mackenzie's Voyage to the Pacific Ocean in 1793* (Chicago, IL: R. R. Donnelley and Sons, 1931), introduction, p. xxvii.
29. For a full bibliography of editions, see Lamb (ed.), *The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie*.
30. A. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal on the River St. Laurence through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in the Years 1789 and 1793* (London: Cadell & Davies, 1801; Toronto: The Radisson Society of Canada, 1927), p. 4. All subsequent references to *Voyages from Montreal* will be to the 1927 edition.
31. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. 4.
32. Quoted in Smith, *Alexander Mackenzie, Explorer*, p. 61.
33. Smith, *Alexander Mackenzie, Explorer*, p. 61.
34. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. 5.
35. Ibid., p. 490.
36. Ibid., pp. 10, 52.
37. Ibid., p. 13.
38. Ibid., pp. 20, 97.
39. Ibid., p. 88.
40. Ibid., pp. 17, 21.
41. Smith, *Alexander Mackenzie, Explorer*, p. 63.
42. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, pp. 7–8.
43. Ibid., e.g. pp. 207, 234.
44. Ibid., pp. 308, 364, 368.
45. Ibid., pp. 389–90. See also pp. 174, 204.
46. K. Venema, '"He never harmed an Indian": Ethnographic Consequences of Alexander Mackenzie's Heroic Narrative', *Mosaic*, 35:3 (September 2002), pp. 89–107.
47. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. 6.
48. Ibid., p. 301. See also pp. 278, 368, 442.
49. On the participation of French *voyageurs* on British expeditions after the Conquest, see B. Brouillette, *La Pénétration du continent américain par les Canadiens français, 1763–1846* (Montréal: Granger Frères, 1939).
50. See Gough, *First Across the Continent*, pp. 79–80.
51. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. 136.
52. Ibid., p. 411. See also pp. 332, 361, 366.
53. Ibid., p. 322.
54. Ibid., pp. 373–4.
55. For the names, profiles and later life of several of Mackenzie's crew, see Sheppe (ed.), *First Man West*, epilogue, p. 307.
56. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, e.g. pp. 160, 223, 304.
57. The 'English Chief' is one of the two Indians who are actually named in Mackenzie's text; all the others remain anonymous. In both cases of naming, what is involved is a nickname given by explorers, not an Indian name. See P. Duchemin, '"A Parcel of Whelps": Alexander Mackenzie among the Indians', in *Native Writers and Canadian Writing: Canadian Literature – Special Issue*, ed. W. H. New (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990), pp. 49–74, on p. 70.
58. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, pp. 225–6.
59. Ibid., p. 386. See also pp. 164, 169, 173.
60. Ibid., pp. 246–7.

61. Ibid., e.g. pp. 242, 243.
62. Ibid., p. 360. See also pp. 178, 352.
63. Ibid., pp. 237, 423.
64. For examples of this, see ibid., pp. 196, 320, 339, 474.
65. Ibid., p. 213.
66. Ibid., p. 258.
67. Duchemin, '"A Parcel of Whelps"', p. 65. See also pp. 63–4.
68. Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. 339.
69. Ibid., p. 296.
70. Ibid.,. p. 267.
71. See I. S. MacLaren, 'Alexander Mackenzie and the Landscapes of Commerce', *Studies in Canadian Literature*, 7:2 (1982), pp. 141–50.

9 Hugues, 'Illusion, (Self-)Delusion: Jefferson's "Corps of Discovery" and the Elusive Northwest Passage (1804–6)'

1. See P. R. Cutright, *A History of the Lewis and Clark Journals* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976).
2. M. Lewis and W. Clark, *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*, ed. B. de Voto (1953; Boston, MA and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981), p. 79.
3. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 92.
4. George Drouillard, whose name is misspelled Drewyer in the *Journals*, was half French and half Shawnee. He served as an interpreter with several tribes and killed much of the game that fed the expedition. Pierre Cruzatte was the son of a French father and an Omaha mother, and was hired for his skill in sign language. Francis Labiche spoke several Indian languages. See S. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York and London: Simon and Schuster, 1996), p. 138.
5. Toussaint Charbonneau had been selected by Lewis as a likely interpreter with the Minetarees. See D. Lavender, *The Way to the Western Sea: Lewis and Clark Across the Continent* (Lincoln, NE and New York: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), p. 158.
6. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 92.
7. Ibid., p. 279.
8. See J. L. Allen, *Lewis and Clark and the Image of the American West* (New York: Dover Publications, 1975), pp. xxii, xxiii, 126.
9. See Allen, *Lewis and Clark,* pp. 59–63.
10. Jefferson had received a map from Andrew Ellicott during the summer of 1801. It showed the area surveyed by Ellicott while travelling in the Mississippi area between 1796 and 1800 (Allen, *Lewis and Clark*, pp. 74–6).
11. T. Jefferson, 'Instructions to Captain Lewis', 20 June 1803, in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings,* ed. M. D. Peterson (New York: The Library of America, 1991), pp. 1126–32, on p. 1127.
12. G. Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean, and Round the World; in which the Coast of North-West America has been Carefully Examined and Accurately Surveyed. Undertaken by His Majesty's Command, Principally with a View to Ascertain the Existence of Any Navigable Communication Between the North Pacific and North Atlantic Oceans; and Performed in the Years 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, and 1795, in the Dis-*

covery Sloop of War, and Armed Tender Chatham, Under the Command of Captain George Vancouver, 3 vols (London: Printed for G. G. and J. Robinson, 1798).
13. See Allen, *Lewis and Clark,* p. 36.
14. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 420.
15. Ibid., p. 431.
16. T. Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784), in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings,* ed. M. D. Peterson (New York: The Library of America, 1991), pp. 123–325, on pp. 143–4.
17. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 173.
18. See Pond's map in Allen, *Lewis and Clark,* pp. 24–5.
19. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 285.
20. See J. Ronda, *Jeffersons's West: A Journey with Lewis and Clark* (Charlottesville, VA: The Thomas Jefferson Foundation, 2000), pp. 24–5.
21. See M. D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 481–507.
22. A. Mackenzie, *First Man West: Alexander Mackenzie's Journal of His Voyage to the Pacific Coast of Canada in 1793*, ed. W. Sheppe (1962; New York: Dover Publications, 1995), p. 51.
23. Ibid., p. 239.
24. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 294.
25. Mackenzie, *Voyage to the Pacific*, p. 49.
26. Ibid., p. 130.
27. Ibid., p. 133.
28. Jefferson, 'Instructions to Captain Lewis', p. 1,127.
29. T. Jefferson, 'Confidential Letter to Congress', 18 January 1803, at http://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/jeffersons-confidential-letter-to-congress [accessed 20 May 2012].
30. Jefferson, 'Instructions to Captain Lewis', p. 1,126.
31. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 188.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p. 189.
34. Ibid., p. 189.
35. See Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, pp. 132–3.
36. Lewis and Clark, *The Journals*, p. 189.
37. Ibid., p. 196.
38. Ibid., p. 201.
39. Ibid., p. 191.
40. Ibid., p. 201.
41. Ibid., p. 193.
42. Ibid.
43. Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, p. 290.
44. J. Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer & Sketches of Eighteenth Century America* (1782; New York: Penguin Books, 1986), p. 71.

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